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COMMONWEAL

Gorbachev's uncertain reformation
Jeffrey W. Hahn

The churches: still waiting
Janice Broun

The Jews & 'glasnost'
Nora Levin

ALSO: Nicaragua, the Sistine Chapel, Bork blues, Evelyn Waugh

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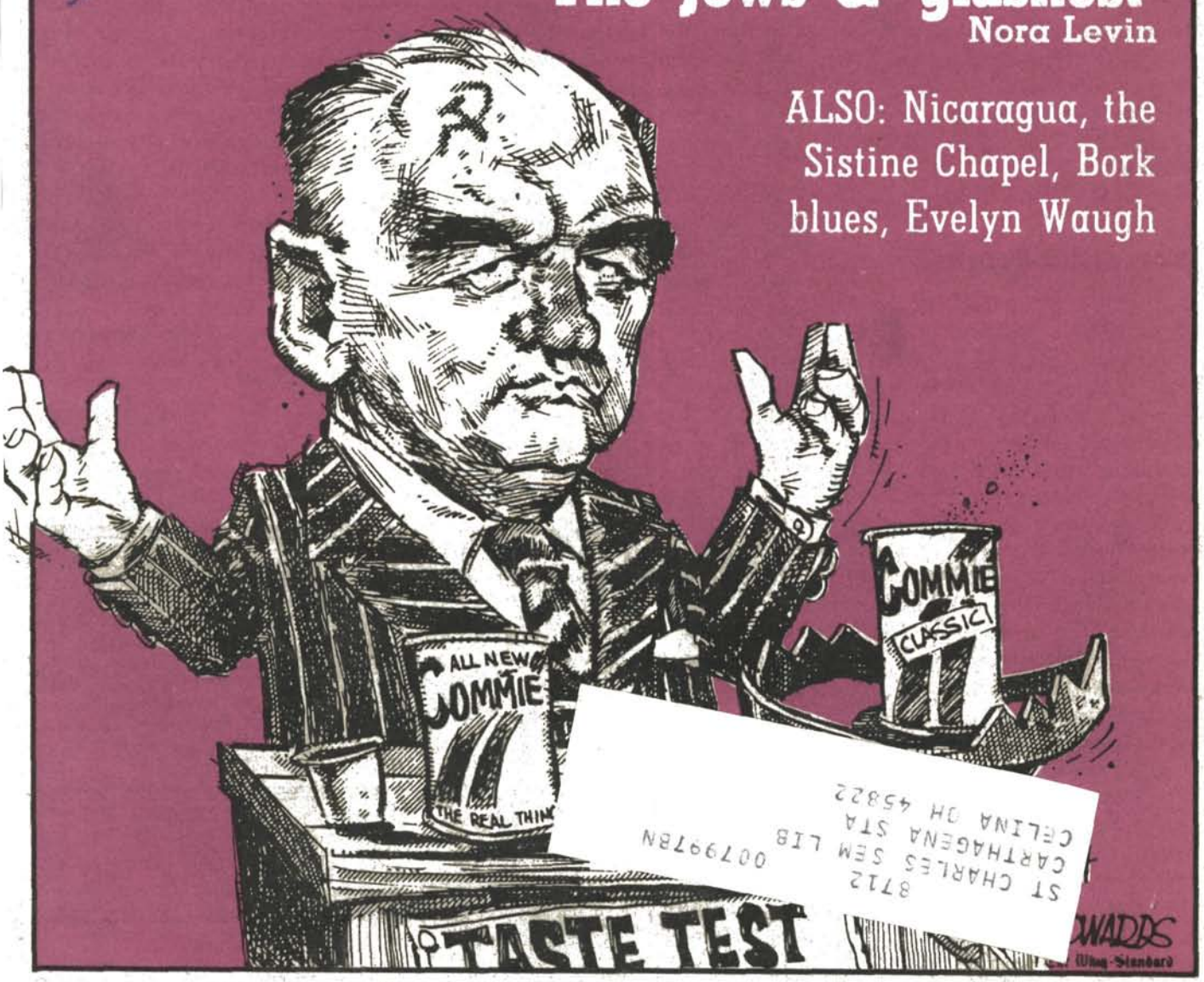

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CORRESPONDENCE

The rest of the story

Antibes, France

To the Editors: In your issue of August 14 which has only just reached me, Mr. Christopher Buckley tells "a true story" told to him by someone "very close" to me (I am unaware of anyone close to me who knows Mr. Buckley) about a Mass I attended said by Padre Pio. I did once attend such a Mass, but there is not a word of truth in the rest of his story. The church was not "packed" (it was five o'clock in the morning); there was no bleeding of the stigmata; I left at the end of the Mass quite normally; there was nothing to "horrify me"; no priest came running with a message to me; I would have been at breakfast and not sitting with a bottle at "the edge of town" — in fact there was no town, only a village.

I trust that the lies in this story will be corrected.

GRAHAM GREENE

Scientific defense

Tasmania, Australia

To the Editors: "Persons of little faith!" is the appropriate response to the editorial "Is deterrence moral?" in your May 8 issue. Even Patrick Jordan, in his dissent in the following issue rightfully claiming that possession of nuclear weapons could never be moral, seems to go along with the concept that some measure of nuclear deterrence will always be unavoidable. The original editorial implies that nuclear weapons cannot be expected ever to disappear because "the knowledge needed to recreate nuclear weaponry will not disappear," and "a nuclear-free world . . . would require a virtually perfect method of detecting any building of nuclear weapons by any nation or terrorist group." So what? Do the editors have such little faith in "the scientist's God-given curiosity, and his ability to play, putter, and ponder" (to quote Einstein)? Where governments have financed scientific research toward insidious cruise missiles that can weave sneakily across terrain and then deliver a horrendous nuclear blast to within tens of meters of their target, and toward exotic Star Wars defenses, could they not equally sponsor research toward the methodology for maintaining a nuclear-free world? General-Secretary Gorbachev has more faith in that goal than the editors, and President Reagan (with his Star Wars) has more faith in the potential of scientists than the editors.

What do scientists think? The International Task Force on Prevention of Nuclear Terrorism found that a "coffee-can bomb" (attempted by a terrorist group gaining entry to a civil nuclear fuel fabrication plant) is not feasible unless many tens of kilograms of plutonium oxide were obtained. Thus terrorists would not find nuclear-bomb making a cinch. What about nations? The first two of ten proposals for disarmament from last year's International Scientists' Peace Congress in Hamburg were "(1) a ban of all tests of nuclear weapons is necessary and can be adequately verified; (2) the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons must be stopped."

This is a start. There is hope. Let's have faith. To make a nuclear weapon requires that uranium be mined, and that plutonium oxide be manufactured from it, and that the bomb be constructed, tested, and delivered. Could not governments finance research toward prevention of the three more easily monitored steps: mining, manufacture of the oxide, and testing? Might not the research be successful if (say) the billions earmarked for Star Wars were re-directed toward these steps?

Finally, let's admit it. The West is technologically superior to the East, and far wealthier than the third world, and thus the West is causing the East to feel insecure and the third world to feel angry. Pride and covetousness, the first two of the seven deadly sins, are what the nuclear deterrent is really defending. As such, it is hopelessly and abysmally immoral — Pray for us sinners now, and at the hour of our death, Amen — especially if it is in an undignified, burning, body-ripping nuclear blast that shatters our automobiles and supermarkets while the poor in the barriadas of South America and hovels of Africa continue to search for morsels to eat.

GRAHAME J. KELLY

Magnificent struggle

Santa Monica, Calif.

To the Editors: I applaud your article by Rosemarie Brickley. ["God Isn't Finished With Me Yet," July 17]. It is a moving description of what I hear frequently while counseling people in the lay dialogue program of the National Conference of Christians and Jews — that lay women and men are struggling magnificently with issues of morality and theology in their daily lives. The key to psychological renewal is spiritual renewal. I'm glad you are offering intelligent voices like Ms. Brickley's to describe the process of spiritual renewal in daily life.

LEONARD FELDER

Correction

Flushing, N.Y.

To the Editors: "The Uses of Spectacle," by Abigail McCarthy [September

(Continued on page 606)

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COMMONWEAL

The Judge Bork Blues

When Judge Bork and the administration determined to carry the judge's Supreme Court nomination to the floor of the Senate, it was widely conceded they had little chance of victory. Their primary objective, it was said, was no longer the Bork nomination itself. Instead, they intended to mount an attack on the "distortions," the "politicization," the "lynch mob" conduct of Judge Bork's opponents and thereby clear the ground for the president's next nominee, if not even reinsert the conservative "social agenda" into next year's election.

This journal has long argued that questions of judicial *and political* philosophy, not just questions of technical competence, judicial temperament, and personal integrity, should be examined by the Senate when considering nominees for the Supreme Court. This was actually the prevailing attitude throughout most of the nation's history, but had become a distinctly minority opinion only a few decades ago. By that time, it was widely assumed that the Senate should defer to the president's political preferences in regard to judicial appointments in the way it properly deferred in regard to executive-branch appointments. Doubts about the basis for this deference have steadily grown, provoked in part by the Reagan administration's own declared wish to reshape the political coloration of the federal judiciary. The White House might urge the old deference in sending up Mr. Bork's name, but the political significance of this latest nomination was simply too obvious, and the Senate hearings showed that a new standard for confirmation (in fact, the traditional one) had been definitely adopted.

Does this standard amount to "personal vilification and public lynching" as Judge Bork's supporters are now claiming? The judge himself has valid grounds for complaint. The questioning of Bork by Senators Kennedy, Mentzenbaum, and Leahy was frequently boorish and demagogic. The media campaigns and direct mailings by Planned Parenthood, People for the American Way, and other liberal lobbies have been marked by emotionally manipulative exaggerations. These have not been ineffective. To hear, for example, an activist nun, capable of understanding the details of constitutional claims, expressing dismay that Judge Bork "ordered women to be sterilized," is to want to respond, "Now wait a minute. . . ."

There is, however, something monumentally hypocritical about the cries of pain coming from administration loyalists. They have never hesitated to mount demogogic campaigns of exactly this sort. Political mailings come across our desk regularly accusing liberal Senators and Representatives of being in cahoots with Communists, criminals, and pornographers. We wonder whether Senators Hatch and Simpson have checked the mail that goes out over their names or from organizations they endorse. President Reagan himself has hardly been a model of

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precision and judiciousness in his charges that the Supreme Court has taken God out of the schools. Accusations that Senator Kennedy is guilty of vilification ring false coming from conservatives who know that right-wing publicity has demonized Mr. Kennedy for years. If the administration is going to take Mr. Bork's critics to task for their slogans and distortions, good. We only hope that a liberal with relatively clean hands in the Bork battle responds directly by detailing the administration's own record in this regard. Maybe a lesson can be learned all around.

Even those with short memories should recall that the Bork nomination was originally seen as a sure thing. Administration strategists were reported congratulating themselves on a political coup. Opposing the nomination, they said, would be a trap for liberals with presidential hopes like Senators Biden and Simon. They might have to vote no on Bork to appease influential groups within the Democratic party, but they would soon find themselves looking like spoilsports and overwhelmed by presidential popularity across the country. A fight over Bork, moreover, would once again raise public consciousness of the conservative "social agenda," to liberal disadvantage. None of this calculation, it should be noted, had much to do with Mr. Bork's credentials as a jurist.

The effect of the well-orchestrated anti-Bork campaign has been mainly to neutralize what the White House assumed to be its political edge. If the likelihood of confirmation once rested on the political difficulty that Southern Democrats might have encountered in opposing a nominee advertized as conservative, then the mobilization of black leadership offset that pressure with a counterpressure. If liberals were supposed to be trapped by the danger of resurrecting the "social agenda," then the anti-Bork lobbying demonstrated that the "social agenda" could cut two ways. The administration argues that the anti-Bork blitz has kept the Senate from judging the nominee "on the merits." One could argue to the contrary that it has allowed the Senate to do exactly that.

What about the future? Obviously there are high politics and low politics. When we urged that the Senate openly examine the political ideologies of Court nominees, we hoped that this might *minimize* the questioning of personal integrity that had, in previous cases, been substituted for a political scrutiny considered taboo. To some extent, the low politics — the simplifications and distortions — to which Judge Bork has been subject, arise from the lingering illegitimacy of high politics — arguable matters of principle and worldview — in the Senate's deliberations. Thus Alabama Senator Howell Heflin felt compelled to frame the issue as whether Mr. Bork were an "extremist" or a "true conservative." It should not have been necessary to suggest the judge might be an "extremist" to refuse to confirm him. It should have been sufficient to say that he is not "my kind of conservative" or the kind of conservative the country needs now. The impression that moderate objections to the nominee's political and judicial viewpoint are not enough forces opponents to voice immoderate ones.

Likewise, the fact that the person filling this particular seat

may tip an already closely divided Court is a perfectly legitimate consideration for liberal Senators. They should not have to pretend that a Bork or his equivalent represents some extraordinary deviation in constitutional interpretation not represented by, say, a Rehnquist or a Scalia. (In fact, if these three conservatives were competing for a single seat on the Court, Mr. Bork might well be our first choice.) Liberals should quickly squelch the idea that they are voting against Mr. Bork because he is a Threat to the Republic; otherwise they will find themselves having to accept an obscure nominee who can't possibly be portrayed so luridly. Falsely crying "Wolf!" once may be once too often.

Despite the "low politics" currently in the foreground, what is at issue between the administration and the coalition that has blocked the Bork nomination are honest differences of political outlook — that is, of "high politics." There will either be a compromise at the higher level or more streetfighting at the lower one. Right now, it seems, the decision is up to the White House.

CENTRAL AMERICA

PEACE PLAN PROBLEMS

OBSTACLES & OPPORTUNITIES

Can the Central American peace plan bring peace, democracy, and stability to the region? The Reagan administration says it is not sufficient, and insists on continuing to aid the Nicaraguan *contras* and requiring additional measures of the Sandinista government.

The administration cannot get its way without congressional support, which it does not have at the moment. Congress is not inclined to review *contra* aid, or take any action that would give the Nicaraguan government an excuse not to fulfill its obligations under the plan. Between these two positions lies a

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third one that would reinforce the plan's chances of success and also meet U.S. concerns.

The basic idea of the peace plan is to trade peace for democracy, on the theory that democracy would remove the reason for war. What made agreement possible on this concept was the provision that both peace and democracy would be implemented simultaneously. Without simultaneity, the plan does not have a chance of working.

This means Congress should withhold aid but send a clear signal that it would approve aid if the Sandinistas do not comply with the plan. The most immediate danger is that the timetable for compliance will be extended indefinitely, in effect frustrating the clear-cut peace-for-democracy bargain envisioned in the plan.

Beyond this, there are two difficulties in such a swap. First, democracy cannot be implanted overnight. Second, it can be reversed by those in power. No negotiated settlement could surmount either difficulty completely; the question is whether the plan sets out a clear definition of democracy. The signatories agreed to implement the basic freedoms of association, press, political parties, and other civil rights.

The reason that critics doubt this definition is sufficient is the Sandinistas' failure to live up to similar commitments they made to the OAS in 1979. While Costa Rican President Oscar Arias told me that the Sandinistas were quite clear about the meaning of the provisions they have agreed to, their rhetoric gives rise to some concern. One high Nicaraguan official told me, "We are here to stay. The United States must accept that." The Sandinistas firmly believe that they are entitled to govern because they fought for and won power.

Of course, any elected government wants to retain power, but it must allow the possibility of being voted out in a democratic system. The Reagan administration would like the Sandinistas to stand in elections right away to test their intentions; while the U.S. might have been able to secure such a provision had it been willing to negotiate, the Central Americans did not have sufficient leverage to do so.

The current plan's provisions, if implemented, may produce an opening that could grow into democracy. In order for this to happen, the other countries must insist that the basic freedoms are fully permitted, and the opposition must make full use of them. If this happens, a Guatemalan official argued, the Sandinistas may find the political system changing in ways they cannot control, at least short of using brute force, which would damage greatly their fragile international standing. Holding power, he pointed out, is not the same as exercising it. The Guatemalan military decided to hold free elections when its domestic and international standing reached a low ebb, even though it was not forced to turn over power.

The plan also calls for 1988 elections for a regional parliament, and the Nicaraguan constitution calls for municipal elections. This gives the opposition an opportunity to gain a more secure platform, and it will test the Sandinistas' willingness to democratize. If this optimistic scenario occurs, the opposition will have more time to prepare for presidential elections. It has been weak and divided, and the returning exiles need to build a political base in the country.

The fear is that the Sandinistas may not care whether they are seen as democrats, particularly if they have disarmed the *contra* threat. There is no question that the military and security apparatus they have is capable of maintaining them in power. This raises the other problems with the peace plan, namely whether it can achieve security, demilitarization, and regional stability.

The peace plan refers all matters of troop and arms levels and foreign bases to the Contadora process for resolution. But it sets no starting or concluding date for negotiation; this is a serious deficiency, given that Contadora has been unable to produce an agreement after four years. The Honduran July 31 proposal would have established such a timetable, but this was rejected. Still, several Central American officials profess confidence in a standing Contadora "factorization" formula, which would permit equivalent but different force structures. A basic difficulty is that the countries' military needs differ, especially in El Salvador's case if its war continues.

It is unclear whether the political momentum generated by the current peace plan will lead to the conclusion of a security agreement. One senior U.S. diplomat in the region noted that if the democratization proceeds, the security problems could diminish. But the Central Americans would do well to set a deadline that would give impetus to the process. Some partial solutions are possible: the Salvadorans have proposed a bilateral agreement with the Nicaraguans that would monitor and verify that each is not aiding the other's insurgencies. The international verification commission is supposed to do this, but many fear that its diverse composition makes for endless disputes that will cripple its effectiveness.

Finally, one security issue is not dealt with in either the peace plan or the Contadora framework — foreign advisers and foreign military aid. The Reagan administration would like Soviet and Cuban advisers and aid halted; the Central Americans are not less eager for the Nicaraguans to stop receiving Soviet bloc military aid, but there is a very good reason why they could not make this part of either multilateral plan. Nicaragua would have required a quid pro quo from its neighbors — namely, that they refrain from receiving U.S. aid and advisers. The Salvadorans in particular would not have accepted such a deal.

Many Central American officials hope that the U.S. will address this problem itself. While the U.S. might have secured a cutoff of Soviet bloc aid in exchange for cutting off *contra* aid, it will not have that bargaining chip if the Central American peace plan goes through. The Sandinistas have offered to discuss this with the U.S. in bilateral talks; the other possibility is for the U.S. to raise the issue directly with the providers.

Given its reluctance to talk with the Nicaraguan government, the U.S. might find this latter option more palatable. It could offer the Soviets some quid pro quo such as a cutoff of U.S. aid to the Afghan rebels; and it could offer the Cubans any number of improvements in bilateral relations. The Cubans have said that they will not negotiate with the U.S. over Nicaragua, but they are also eager to remedy their own

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economic and political problems, which the U.S. can help them do.

The Reagan administration has correctly identified the weaknesses in the Central American's peace plan, but it has not yet set about remedying them. It may choose to, preferring to risk being left without a policy. The next administration, one hopes, will be up to the challenge of serious diplomacy.

LINDA ROBINSON

Linda Robinson is an associate editor of Foreign Affairs *and recently spent three weeks in Central America.*

CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS

NO BENEFIT OF APPEAL

REGISTRATION & BASIC RIGHTS

Recently two young men came to my office seeking my advice about registration for the draft. They were religious conscientious objectors to all forms of war, preparation for war, and killing. Registration is the first step in that process. But, at the registration stage, there is no legal way to object. Consequently, they faced the possibility of five years in prison and/or a $10,000 fine if they did not register. Let me explain:

There are presently three actively enforced draft laws that deny any right to conscientious objection: the draft registration requirement and two Solomon Act laws. The first requires all young men born after 1960 to register with the Selective Service or face criminal conviction with a maximum of five years in prison and a $10,000 fine. The Solomon Act laws preclude nonregistrants from access to federal education or job training assistance.

None of these laws contain provisions to allow a C.O. to register as such. There is no right of administrative hearing to one who feels he cannot register because of his conscience. Finally, no C.O. may raise conscientious objection as a defense to any criminal prosecution resulting from nonregistration. In addition, the Solomon Act laws also preclude any administrative hearing or juridical review for any denial of educational and job training benefits. The result is that under these laws thousands of C.O.s face indictment, felony conviction, and loss of federal assistance if they refuse to register for the draft. All this will be accomplished by a simple refusal to register. Given past Supreme Court decisions, such fundamental lack of due process would seem to be unconstitutional on its face. Unfortunately, the majority of lower federal courts have found the Solomon Act constitutional with no word yet from the Supreme Court.

The two young men who came to my office were religious C.O.s. One was a Methodist, the other a Catholic. They came because of my previous experience with C.O.s during the Vietnam era. I explained all the possible consequences of their refusal, but did not try to dissuade or encourage them. It was their decision to make with full disclosure and knowledge. If it was a conscientious decision, it would be their consciences, not my ability to advocate, that would be at issue.

The two young men felt they could not honestly tell the government that they were available for military service without also stating that they would refuse to take any part in the military machine. They felt that registration was a first step in the killing process and they had to conscientiously object right from the beginning. No dissimulation, no doublespeak, no hiding their status. They wanted to witness for peace and nonviolence at all times and in every condition. When I asked whether they could sign the registration form and wait for later contact with the Selective Service which would allow them to express their C.O. status, they demurred for the same reasons. To them, registration is a form of dishonesty. By registering they would be telling the government where they lived, with no provision for telling the same government who they were. Moreover, they considered registration a form of hypocrisy where being "good boys" would assure themselves govern-

Minutes of the parents' meeting

The meeting of the Parents' Advisory Committee was called to order at 7:05 on November 17 by Janet Goodman, director of the Child Care Center.

Moira Kvetch reported that trace elements of PCB had been detected in Happy Child apple juice. Janet replied that the Center had already stopped ordering Happy Child and switched to a less toxic brand. Sandra Hamilton wondered if the prevalence of diaper rash was connected to the apple juice. Moira thought it was more likely the result of Poopum's Diapers, which contain a preservative suspected of causing rectal cancer in rats.

Chris Lane complained that the walk needs sand in the winter. Moira noted that a chemical in sand causes emphysema in rats.

Sandra regretfully reported that Timmy Tuttle had bitten her daughter three times. Sheila Tuttle said Timmy had been provoked but admitted that he was high-strung. Orlando Dickerson said if Timmy bit his daughter once more he too would be provoked. Sheila Tuttle said that if Orlando touched her Timmy she would charge him with assault-and-battery and child abuse.

Harold Hughes asked if the issue of back problems could be raised. Chris said only if he didn't have to pick it up. Harold said the parking lot was so far from the entrance that he had to carry his kids a dangerous distance.

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mental benefits under the two Solomon Acts. After they heard me out, they promised to think and to pray over what I said and to come back to see me in a week.

When they returned, they informed me of *their* decision to resist. I simply responded that I now was prepared to proceed from their attorney status, to aiding and abetting them openly in this decision. I wrote the attorney general, the local U.S. Attorney, and the District Federal Court of their decision, of which I fully approved. We are presently awaiting action by the government. Other men who have been found guilty have been sent to prison; aiders and abetters have so far not been indicted, but the government must make a decision about these latter men and women very soon. Chances are that a few will be selected, indicted, and sentenced.

Historically, conscientious objection by religious groups and individuals was vigorously protected from colonial days. Rhode Island and Pennsylvania had statutes in this respect as far back as 1670 and 1673. The right was so absolute that such persons could not be forced to train or kill in the face of invading hostile forces from Dutch settlers and Indians. In the face of this danger, the Rhode Island Legislature passed the Militia Conscription Bill in 1673, which exempted from active military duty all those who for reasons of conscience could not "train, arm, rally to fight, or kill another person." Pennsylvania, under William Penn the Quaker, had done the same in 1670.

For those who like to talk about "original intent" of the Founding Fathers, the question of conscientious objection goes to the heart of the Bill of Rights itself. On June 8, 1789, Virginia Rep. James Madison introduced the original Bill of Rights into Congress. The original Third Amendment read as follows: "A well-regulated militia . . . being the last security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed, but no one religiously scrupulous of bearing arms, shall be compelled to render military service in person." While this right of conscientious objection was ultimately not accepted, it was because the Bill of Rights was originally applicable only to the federal government which did not conscript. All the original colonies had such a right in their charters and in their own militia laws. And this was recognized even during the gravest threats to the new nation. During the Revolutionary War, when Philadelphia was in imminent

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Sheila said the only solution is not to pick up anything weighing more than twenty-five pounds, even if it is wailing and related to you. Orlando said this might account for Timmy Tuttle's sociopathic behavior.

Moira recommended a local chiropractor. Harold asked if that was covered by Blue Cross. Orlando said that there are a lot of quacks out there. Sheila said she had tried medication, physical therapy, and a chiropractor but remained practically invalid. Janet suggested an acupuncturist. Moira said she heard of a woman who had contracted AIDS from an acupuncturist's needles.

Chris said that all the parents with back problems should meet Thursdays at the acupuncturist and he would order Chinese food, if somebody else would carry it. Moira said she read that MSG caused sterility in minnows. Chris said that to keep from having any more kids he was ready for more drastic measures.

Moira inquired about the status of Kiki Kyler's open, running sore. Janet said the Kylers continued to insist that it was simply a cold sore. Moira asked if teachers should be required to take tests for AIDS and Herpes.

Orlando asked about Christmas presents for the teachers. Sheila said she had had trouble organizing it last year, due to parents' reluctance to fork up, and had decided to leave it up to individual preference this year. Chris said the reason the kids were in day care was that he didn't have time to sleep, never mind shop. Orlando noted that a joint effort was preferable since you couldn't get anything nice for two bucks any more.

Sheila suggested we give the teachers money, but Orlando said this was insulting, because they are professionals, not hired help. Chris said they were professional paupers, thanks to the board's veto of any increase in fees, and they would probably appreciate a Christmas bonus. Moira said she and some other parents had already bought gifts. Sheila suggested the remaining parents chip in five bucks. Chris said that was chinsey, and that each family should contribute fifteen bucks. Orlando said giving money was patronizing. Chris said Orlando could patronize him with money any time.

Chris asked if Orlando tipped the milkman and postman at Christmas. Orlando said the postal union was the fattest in America, and that twenty years of service got them pensions twice as large as our salaries. Sheila said that she didn't get her mail until 4:30 and constantly saw her mailman parked and reading magazines.

Janet said if we took up collections within groups, the Piglets' teachers wouldn't get nearly as much as the Baboon's teachers, since there are so many more Baboons than Piglets. The issue was left unresolved. Sheila was troubled by the reading for the Baboons. She said that *Peter Pan* was the most sexist story she had ever read, and that there are no girls in *The Hobbit*. She was horrified to learn that her daughter Regan thought only boys could kill pirates and mutilate goblins. Jane promised Christmas stories that would show little boys and little girls could be equally vicious.

The meeting was adjourned at 9 P.M.

ROBERT H. BELL

Robert H. Bell teaches English at Williams College and is a frequent contributor to Commonweal.

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danger of being taken by the British, Gen. George Washington wrote: "As the principal object of the enemy is . . . the City of Philadelphia, it is absolutely necessary that every person able to bear arms (except such as are conscientiously scrupulous against in every case), should give their personal service."

The U.S. Supreme Court has never directly confronted the question of whether a person has a constitutional right to be a conscientious objector. It has interpreted Article 1, Section 8, as giving Congress the power to draft. Under this article, said the Court, Congress had absolute power to grant or withhold exemption from the draft at its discretion because it is the duty of citizens by force of arms to defend the government.

But the "Free Exercise Clause" gives the objecting religious citizen the power not to obey such a law if he or she is conscientiously opposed to it, unless the government can show not only a legitimate governmental interest but a "compelling state interest" of paramount necessity in order to justify an infringement on religious practices and beliefs. Even then the government must use the least restrictive means to achieve its goal.

The registration law and the Solomon Acts force C.O.s to choose between their consciences and the law, between governmental benefits and a violation of conscience by signing a draft pledge. There is no space on any of the registration forms for indicating C.O. status. This simple procedure would provide a way out for C.O.s, as well as give the government all the information it is seeking. The present laws provide no alternate forms, no appeals procedures. As such, they violate almost every Supreme Court case that has addressed such issues (e.g., *Girouard v. United States* in 1946). Even the courts are denied the discretion of granting C.O. claims, and the Solomon Acts make no provision for C.O. exemptions, providing neither administrative nor judicial review. The rights of conscience are completely ignored in all three laws.

This pointless offense to conscience and needless conflict for religiously sincere objectors could be easily remedied by an act of Congress. That would not force the constitutional issue. If our legislators cannot see their way to such a simple acknowledgment and accommodation, then young men like those who came to my office will be looking to the Court, which has, after all, protected other religiously based refusals — not to salute the flag or work on Sunday, for example — that are far less oppressive and overbearing.

PETER J. RIGA

Peter Riga is an attorney in private practice.

OF SEVERAL MINDS John Garvey

POLITICS WON'T CURE DEATH

REMINDERS OF INEVITABILITY

When my seventeen-year-old son said the other day that it might not be too great a tragedy if a race which allowed for Spuds MacKenzie beer commercials were destroyed in a nuclear war, I was at first inclined to agree. I was reminded of a line of graffiti a friend saw years ago: "A world which makes Twinkies and cars with fins owes me a living." People have written at some length about the effect of the threat of nuclear war on the way young people understand the world they live in, but my son's misanthropic comment makes me think that there are some other forms of psychic damage being done to young people, and the rest of us as well.

Before dry, serious activists take up their pens to write to me, accusing me of thinking that irritating beer commercials are worse than nuclear war, let me say that working for peace is very important, our most important political job and one of our most important moral ones.

However, I am concerned with the ways in which our thinking about nuclear war can become too narrow, as if that were our major problem. It is clear that unless we change the way we look at the nation-state and our relation to it, we will fill in the gap left by nuclear armaments with chemical and biological warfare and a great increase in conventional weaponry and troop strength. It is not at all clear that we will be safer. Beyond this, it is necessary to be clear about our attachment to moral causes of any sort: are they really about what we claim they are, even when we deeply believe our own claim? I don't question that a movement to reduce or eliminate nuclear arms is about doing just that — but my attachment to it might mean something more, or anyway something other, than a desire to see weapons eliminated. There is some reason to be suspicious about the concerns people have at public and political levels with the arms race, the depletion of the ozone layer, and AIDS. All of these superficially unrelated things are serious, all deserve serious study and work, and we are fools if we think that our leaders, left to themselves, will do anything other than make matters worse — it is important to watch the people in charge like hawks. I am not counseling quietism.

But our concern shifts and changes almost fashionably; like fashion, our concerns seem to be odd forms of weather (there is an unexpected paisley front moving in, followed by brief passages of leather, and the weekend forecast includes a new linen look). For example, you would think from the anti-nuclear demonstrations of a few years ago that the consciousness of the masses had been raised at last, and finally, with all these millions in the streets, the race would awake. The race had it consciousness raised for about five minutes, and then got interested in something else.

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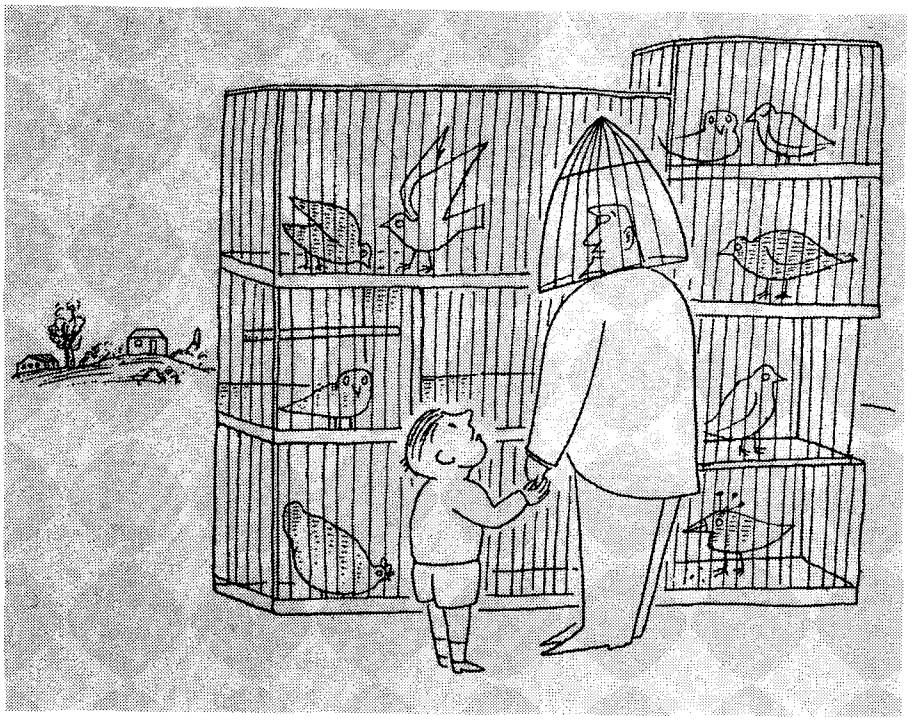

Two things have to be said about this. (Well, probably more than two, but this column can't get too long.) I have mentioned one before: it involves the way politics can become a substitute for morality, a sign to yourself and to others that you are the right sort of person because you feel the right way about something important. In a secular society which is pervaded by electronic media the things we have urged on us as important must change, in order to keep news before us. If environmental issues, issues of war and peace, or health issues, do not periodically change places in competing for our attention and concern, they become olds, not news, and people change channels.

The other point is that a lot of our major concerns are ways of dealing in a round-about way with a fear of mortality — or, rather, not dealing with it. There is an American tendency to think that if we eat and drink right and don't smoke and if we exercise, we will not die. We will be safe, our children will be safe, if we deal in the right way with AIDS, the nuclear threat, the environment, etc. All of these things are metaphors for death itself.

This sort of thing has been said before, by me and by other people, and its meanest use has been by conservatives, who want to discredit any involvement in movements for peace and justice. Believe me, I think that much of the reasoning (and the feeling) behind work for peace, justice, and ecology is exactly what it should be. But our motives are often mixed, and in a society as distracted and directionless as ours is, we have to fight our way clear of a lot of weedy thinking to find any clarity at all. Even in some of the writing I admire most (Jonathan Schell's *Fate of the Earth*, for example) there are assumptions which I think need to be questioned, though not always in the ways conservatives have pointed.

Here is an example: some critics of Schell and other anti-nuclear thinkers have argued that the peace movement assumes that the worst thing which could happen to anyone is death, a plainly unchristian idea, since we believe that our lives and the lives of all human beings are eternal. They ignore the fact that a great many advocates of disarmament would argue that it is morally wrong to risk the lives of future generations for reasons of state, and would argue further that killing on such a monstrous scale is indefensible, and a far worse evil than dying.

However, to the extent that a fear of death is what drives us, politically and morally, there is reason to mistrust our direction. I believe that death is every bit as dreadful as it looks. As a Christian I believe, in the words of the Orthodox Easter liturgy, that "Christ has risen from the dead, trampling down death by death, and upon those in the tombs bestowing life." If death were not terrible, the resurrection would not be so hopeful.

But even if I were not a Christian, even if I were a Buddhist or an agnostic, the fact would remain that my death is inevitable, and so is the death of everyone I love. Unless the human race can manage somehow to outlive the physical universe, there will even be a time when the race as a whole will die. Our terror of illness, and our fear of aging, come from the fact that these things are reminders of this inevitability, from which we spend so much time distracting ourselves. Whether we die because of AIDS or the bomb or some great natural catastrophe, the fact remains that if one cause of death is avoided, another will get to us somewhere down the line.

To say that all of us will die is obvious, and yet no one lives as if this were the case. It is a fact that everything we do is done in the face of death. This may be why so many of us are terrified of solitude and silence, which remind us too powerfully of our contingent and limited natures. We should at least be aware of the extent to which this drives us to distraction, and not allow ourselves to be moved foolishly.

There is a short novel called *Adultery*, by André Dubus, one of the wisest and best contemporary American writers, which tells of an affair between a former priest and a woman whose husband is unfaithful and completely self-centered. The former priest, Dubus writes, believes "that bread and wine becoming body and blood was neither miracle nor mystery, but natural, for it happened within the leap of the heart of man toward the heart of God, a leap caused by the awareness of death." Much of what we do, politically and culturally, is done as a distraction, and some of the things we are involved in, politically and culturally, are at heart not very different from watching a game show. They are attempts to distract ourselves from our emptiness, or to find a permanence, a grounding, which death teaches us is unavailable.

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GORBACHEV'S UNCERTAIN REFORMATION

WHAT HAS CHANGED & WHAT HAS NOT

JEFFREY W. HAHN

When I was in Moscow, I was accompanied by some Soviet friends to that venerable Russian institution, the steam bath. Discarding their inhibitions with their clothes, my friends soon engaged in another favorite Russian pastime: the swapping of *anekdoty*, short stories satirizing the realities of daily Soviet life. One that I recall was an explanation of the five contradictions of Soviet socialism:

In the Soviet Union, there is no unemployment, because nobody works.

Because nobody works, there is nothing in the stores.

Although there is nothing in the stores, everyone has everything.

Although everyone has everything, no one is satisfied.

Although no one is satisfied, they always vote in favor.

At the time, this struck me as a deliciously ironic description of much of Soviet reality in the waning months of Party Secretary Konstantin Chernenko's leadership — if it can be called that. In fact, the Soviet Union in that fall of 1984 was going nowhere. Since then, there has been a nearly total change of political leadership at the top; of the twenty-seven or so members and candidate members of the Politburo and the Secretariat who make decisions for Soviet society, only nine remain from the last Brezhnev Party Congress in 1981, including the current General Secretary of the CPSU, Mikhail Gorbachev. Moreover, this successor generation of leaders has adopted as its main goal the comprehensive reconstruction — *perestroika* — of Soviet society.

Much has been written about the changes taking place today in the Soviet Union. In my view, while these changes are important, real, and demonstrable, they are only a beginning. The rush to judgment by many Western journalists and academics about whether Gorbachev will succeed in reconstructing Soviet society is premature.

What we can do at this point is to describe what has changed so far and what has not. The basis for my answers to these questions comes from living in Moscow with my family from early February to June of 1987 while I was teaching in the Law Faculty of Moscow State University as a Fulbright exchange scholar. What follows represents a rather personal inventory of what is happening today in the Soviet Union, or at least in Moscow.

One of the most visible changes striking a foreign observer comparing Soviet life in 1984 and 1987 is the policy of *glasnost*. This term is usually translated in the Western press as "openness," but the translation is not altogether accurate. The root of the word *glasnost* is *glas* which is derived from *golos* meaning "voice" or "vote." A literal translation of *glasnost* would be awkward — something like "voicedness." I prefer the term "public expression."

It seems clear that the limits on what can be expressed publicly have greatly expanded in the first two years of Gorbachev's tenure. Millions of Soviet viewers were able to watch British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher vigorously defend nuclear deterrence as the key to peace in Europe, French Premier Jacques Chirac condemn Soviet civil rights policies, and American talk-show host Phil Donahue inquire (albeit unsuccessfully) into the sexual practices of Soviet youth. Factory managers and ministers were asked pointed and sometimes embarrassing questions, and scholars debated the merits of government policies.

In *Za rubezom*, a weekly compilation of foreign news, one could read articles by American conservatives, including Richard Pipes and Richard Perle, on the evils of communism in the Soviet Union. *Moscovskii novosti* (Moscow News) printed verbatim a letter by ten Soviet émigrés to the effect that the Soviet Union was incapable of reform as long as it remained communist and that *perestroika* was a delusion designed for Western consumption. Soviet academics in the fields of sociology, government, and economics argue in Moscow dailies and in intellectual journals for greater freedom of research and debate. Their policy prescriptions are occasionally radical in the Soviet context. Thus, one economist, Nikolai Shmelev, writing in the June issue of *Novyi Mir*, argued enthusiastically for greater use of the profit motive in

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economic development, noting that "over the centuries, humankind has found no more effective measure of work than profit." The publication of such a view would have been unthinkable in 1984.

Alongside the usual articles condemning Western imperialism and extolling the virtues of exemplary collective farms and socialist heroes of labor are complaints of shortages, exposures of corruption or ineptitude, and attacks on environmental pollution. In short, if the balance of news in 1984 was tilted toward the achievements of Soviet socialism, the emphasis now is on the problems that need to be resolved. As a result, the Soviet media have become more interesting to read and to watch. Now many Soviets subscribe to such mass dailies as the *Vechernaia Moskva* (Moscow Evening News) and *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (Soviet Russia) because they sell out so quickly.

On the level of high culture, changes ushered in by *glasnost* are also apparent. Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* is only the most prominent example of a long suppressed work soon to be published. Anna Akhmatova's anti-Stalinist poem Requiem is published and read in Moscow theaters. The Stalin period is also explored critically by the contemporary Soviet writer, Anatoli Rybakov, in *Children of the Arbat*, and in the movie *Pokaiania* by the Georgian director, Tengiz Abuladze. Moscow intellectuals are heartened and excited by the new direction being taken. As one poet and literary critic put it to me over dinner, "You know, three years ago, if I found 30 pages of *Novyi Mir* (a 300-page literary journal) interesting, I would think it a successful issue. Now, while I may not agree with everything, all 300 pages are worth reading."

It would be wrong to conclude that *glasnost* has resulted in the freedom of expression or "openness," if you will, as this term is understood in the West. The press is freer in Moscow today than in 1984, but it is not free. The editor of *Moscow News* was taken to task for printing the open letter of the ten Soviet émigrés, as was the editor of *Ogonek* for publishing an article about gangs of youths from the working-class suburb of Luberi, who were attacking their more privileged peers in the city whose clothing and tonsorial styles they considered decadent. Crime and disaster stories and the personal lives of public figures — common fodder for Western news media — are not found in the Soviet press. Pornography also remains taboo. The legitimacy of the CPSU to make decisions for Soviet society is never questioned, at least by Soviet writers, nor is Soviet foreign policy, especially where it concerns the military. Much Soviet scholarly writing still tends to be cautious and self-censoring. The esoteric art of reading between the lines is still essential; meaning is often implied and the use of language Aesopian and elliptical. Nevertheless, it is obvious that the limits of public expression are broader than they were. Just what the boundaries of tolerance are is as yet unclear; they are being tested.

With respect to the movement for civil rights in the Soviet Union, which is, in the end, also a demand for public expression, the record so far is mixed. A number of highly publicized cases have been resolved. Andrei Sakharov, returned from exile in Gorky, continues to speak out on civil rights issues. Anatoli Sharansky, Yuri Orlov, Anatoli Koryagin, and the pianist Vladimir Feltsman have emigrated to the West; Jewish activist Joseph Begun, was released from prison after demonstrations on his behalf in Moscow. One-hundred-forty political prisoners were freed in March and a similar number is to be let go as part of an amnesty in connection with the seventieth anniversary of the October Revolution. Exit visas for "refuseniks" — those whose applications to leave were refused — are supposed to reach 10,000 this year, a ten-fold increase over 1986. There is some evidence that members of other non-Russian nationalities — Germans, for example — will also have an easier time receiving permission to leave if they so choose.

These developments need to be seen in a larger context. The 140 political prisoners freed represents only about 10 percent of those incarcerated for dissent, according to Amnesty International estimates. Jews who apply for emigration still face enormous difficulties including, in most cases, the loss of their jobs and the censure of their Russian neighbors. Demonstrators on behalf of Joseph Begun were severely beaten for their troubles.

The central problem with respect to civil rights, however, is that organized dissent from official government policy remains severely restricted. In part this is because the government refuses to allow public demonstrations against unfair treatment, though the recent protests by Crimean Tatars in Red Square suggest that this too may be changing. The absence of an organized dissident movement in the USSR reflects differences among the dissenters themselves, a fact often overlooked by the Western media which tend to overestimate the

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homogeneity of dissidents' views. In fact, there are deep divisions between refuseniks, who are Jewish and whose main goal is to leave the Soviet Union, and dissidents, like Sakharov, who are more often Russian and who want to stay and encourage those aspects of *perestroika* they consider progressive. Moreover, not all unofficial or semi-official dissent is equally welcome. In May, for example, the unofficial group *Pamiat* was given permission to hold a demonstration in Moscow. On the one hand, their goals seem positive enough: the preservation of Russian historical monuments, protection of the environment, anti-alcoholism, and the strengthening of the family — goals consonant with *perestroika*. At the same time, there is a strong Slavophile component to the *Pamiat* movement. At least some of their members blame Soviet problems on "International Zionism" — often a code word for anti-Semitism — and on Western secret service agencies allegedly trying to undermine the Russian way of life by introducing decadent Western influences.

Important changes are also underway in the Soviet political process. In his speech to the January 1987 plenum of the CPSU Central Committee, Gorbachev stated that democratization was a key component of "reconstruction" and proposed that a degree of competition be introduced in the selection of party and government officials, as well as of managers of factories and enterprises. With respect to government officials, this proposal received concrete expression in the legislation adopted on February 26, establishing a limited number of multiple candidacy districts for the election to village, city, and regional councils. Several election districts, each represented by one deputy, were combined into a new, larger district which was required to have more candidates than the number of seats available, on the order of seven to eight candidates for five seats. Candidates receiving more than 50 percent of the vote were elected. Although only about 5 percent of the total number of deputies to the local Soviets were elected in this fashion, there are over 2.5 million such local officials in the Soviet Union. Thus we can estimate that roughly 170,000 candidates competed for 125,000 positions. The results of this experiment are to be analyzed prior to the next election in 1990, and on the basis of this analysis a new election law is to be adopted for the nation as a whole. Whether or not elections to the Supreme Soviet, also scheduled for 1990, will be held on a competitive basis is a subject of debate among Soviet legal scholars.

More significantly, the process by which candidates are nominated has been opened up. In the Soviet Union, candidates are nominated at their place of work. Previous practice was for a few representatives of the local party committee, trade union, and Komsomol to hold a preliminary meeting to choose their candidates. Their choices were then unanimously ratified by a show of hands at an official nomination meeting for the work collective as a whole. While this approach probably is still common in most cases, friends who attended such meetings report candidates being nominated from the floor, followed by a lengthy discussion of the various candidates' merits, and ending with a secret ballot. In one meeting in Moscow, the "official candidate" to the Moscow city government, an incumbent, was renominated only after severe criticism and a divided vote. In a district in Orlov province, the official candidate was rejected.

Elections to managerial positions in the workplace have also begun to take place in recent months. One case with which I am familiar involved the election of the head of a large and prestigious academic organization. The meeting, attended by staff as well as professors and teachers, lasted eight hours and was marked by an openly critical discussion of the way in which the organization was being run. Although other candidates were proposed from the floor, they declined nomination, and the incumbent was reelected by secret ballot with about 60 percent in favor, 40 percent against.

Some people I talked to cautioned that those elected in this fashion might well be chosen not because they were capable managers, but because they would be more accommodating to their friends and less demanding in the workplace. Yet an automotive factory worker said he and his peers were looking forward to the opportunity to replace incompetent bureaucrats with skilled workers from among their own ranks who at least knew what they were doing and who would be more responsive to innovations proposed from below.

Democratization in the Soviet Union is likely to be a slow and painful process, partly because people are unaccustomed to making real choices and partly because the democratic process is demanding and involves the risk of losing in open competition. The real problem, however, is the dominant role enjoyed by the party in all spheres of Soviet life. Until and unless Gorbachev introduces democratic procedures into the selection of party secretaries and in the relations between the party — which accounts for only about 10 percent of the adult population — and the rest of Soviet society, democratization will remain an unfulfilled promise. Indeed, some have argued that the procedures which have been introduced are intended primarily to remove Gorbachev's opponents and replace them with individuals loyal to the new administration after which talk of democratization will disappear.

Visible changes in the economic life of the country to date have been minimal, although these may be forthcoming if Gorbachev is able to implement the sweeping reforms he proposed in his speech to the plenary session of the Central Committee in late June 1987. Nevertheless, in comparison with 1984, there have been some developments which deserve attention. Arguably, the most dramatic of these is the anti-alcoholism campaign. No alcohol is sold, even in restaurants, before 2 P.M. The price of vodka has doubled and production cut by a third. Champagne and wine are more readily available, but buffets at Moscow theaters, including the Bolshoi, now serve only soft drinks and juice. There seem to be fewer drunks on the streets and vodka consumption at dinner parties is subdued. A major goal of the anti- alcoholism campaign is to improve labor productivity. How successful the

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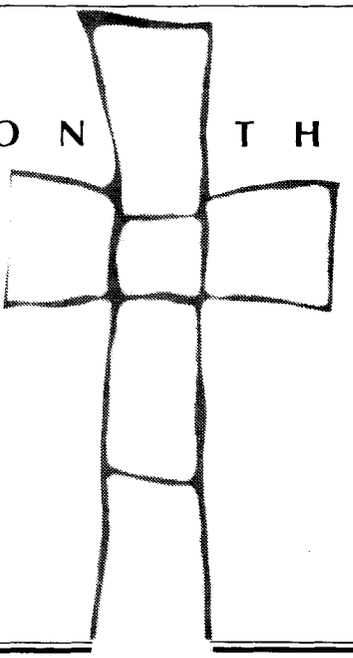
LIBERATION THEOLOGY



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government has been in this regard is difficult to measure, as is the extent to which the reduced availability of vodka is offset by increased production of the illegal home-made variety known as *samagon*. Still, the attempt by Gorbachev to reverse the prodigious drinking habits of a people accustomed to overindulgence through centuries of Russian history deserves comparison to the enforced removal of beards by another famous "Westernizer," Peter the Great.

Another important policy innovation is the introduction of a limited degree of privatization and market relations into the service sector of the Soviet economy. The law on individual labor which went into effect in May gives individuals the right to engage lawfully in activities such as taxi driving, home repairs, and legal services on their own time and according to terms arranged between buyer and seller. In Izmailovsky Park, original paintings ranging in style from day-glow traditionalism to surrealistic modernism, and an equally wide variety of crafts, can be purchased for a price agreed upon with the producer. Also a small number of cooperative restaurants in Moscow are run by groups of individuals who lease property from the state and retain whatever profit they make after costs and taxes. About forty-five of these are supposed to be in operation by the end of the year.

The goal of this limited privatization is to undermine the so-called "second economy," a long-standing alternative for many Moscow consumers to the inefficient services provided by the state-run sector. Take, for instance, electric repairs. If your refrigerator, television, or telephone is not working properly, you can request a repairman from a state-run service shop who will fix your appliance at a fixed rate, his own wages amounting to, say, 20 percent of the price. Since he receives the same wage whether he provides the service tomorrow or in six months, chances are you will wait. But in the "second economy" you agree to pay the serviceman privately the *whole* cost of his services the next time you need repairs. Obviously, such an arrangement is both illegal and highly beneficial to both parties. The only loser is the government. By legalizing such activity, Gorbachev hopes to make the "second economy" part of the first, enabling the state to receive its share of taxes and fees, while raising the level of consumer services.

The possibilities and problems of this approach became clear when I was picked up, quite accidentally, by one of the thirty or so private taxicabs operating in Moscow. The driver offered to take me to my destination for 7 rubles, about 2 or 3 more rubles than the usual fee. When I questioned this he informed me, without rancor, that he was a licensed private driver, not a gypsy cab, and if I preferred a regular cab he would leave me, free of charge, at a taxi stand to wait in line for the next state cab. I was unwilling to do this, and as we proceeded, I asked him about how he got his license. It was not easy. He had to get permission from the State Automobile Inspection station, which verified his driving record and the condition of his car; had to see two doctors — one to attest that he was not an alcoholic or on drugs, and the other to certify his mental competence — had to appear before a special committee established by the local district council ("a board of incompetents," he called them) who questioned him about his work record and required him to pay an annual fee of 560 rubles. Although the number of hours he could work was not restricted, he was only able to work after his regular job as a gym instructor, on weekends, holidays, and during vacations. The operating costs were, of course, his own. When I asked if he thought he was going to make money, he said he would try it for a year and see.

One final economic policy worthy of note is a reemphasis on wage differentials. In an apparent reversal of the trend toward wage equalization characteristic of the Khrushchev and Brezhnev years, Gorbachev has chosen to emphasize that under socialism the principle of wage distribution is "from each according to ability, to each according to work." In other words, pay is linked to performance. The effects of this policy can be seen in the university where I worked. In recent years, advancement from one position on the wagescale to another had become largely a function of seniority. Increments in pay, though all but automatic, were small. Now, as I understand it, several wage categories will be combined. While the number of steps will be fewer, moving from one to another will mean something monetarily. Equally important, advancement will depend on merit, with the latter to be determined by a council of peers. Such reforms could provide a measure of incentive within higher education which had all but disappeared.

The changes in economic life I have described are important, but they do not touch the basic structure of the centrally-planned economic system inherited from the Stalinist years. In that system, output, costs, prices, and distribution are allocated by one or another central ministry all linked to a central planning agency, *Gosplan*. Although Gorbachev has spoken frequently about cost accounting, self-administration, and self-financing, and about the need to modernize the economy through the introduction of the new technologies, in fact, central planning remained largely intact, and prices bore, at best, a spurious relation to the costs of production.

It is for this reason that Gorbachev's speech in the June 1987 plenum of the Central Committee is so important. In it he proposed a fundamental overhaul of the ministerial system, including *Gosplan*, and the decentralization of economic decision making even if it means dislocation in the workplace, including temporary unemployment and bankruptcy. He also called for prices to more nearly reflect costs, a policy which would cause the price of many basic items such as food and housing, now subsidized, to rise sharply. Experience of this kind in Poland in 1980 resulted in the riots which gave rise to the Polish trade union movement, Solidarity. Nevertheless, such changes are essential if the Soviet Union is to overcome its economic stagnation. What the ultimate outcome will be is impossible to assess at this point. The reforms won't even go into effect until 1988. In the case of China, the kinds of reforms Gorbachev has proposed were begun ten years ago and the results are still being evalutated.

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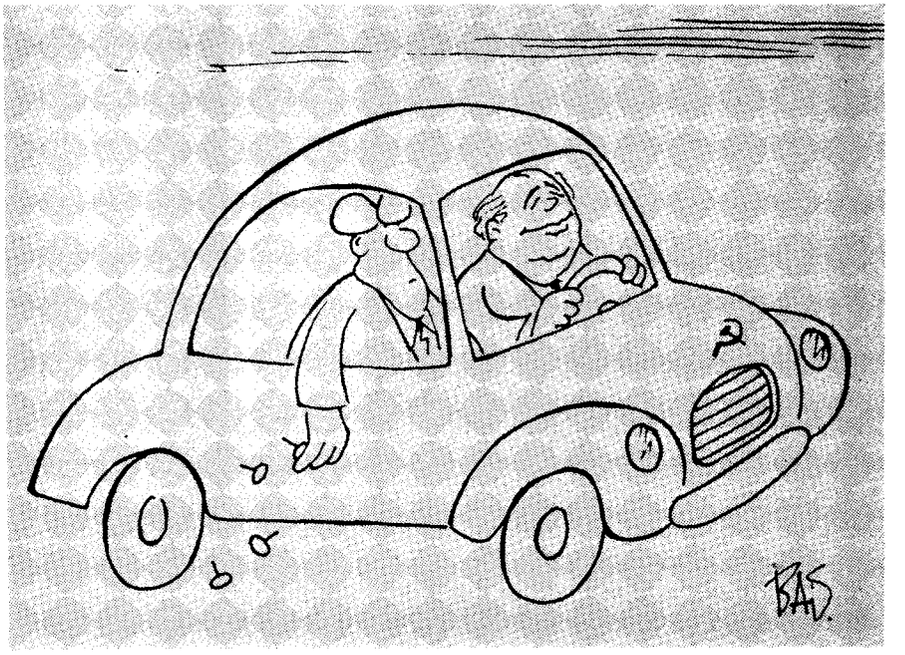
What has not changed since 1984 are the difficulties of everyday life, especially shopping. Even basic items are often "*deficitny,*" in short supply. The appearance of, say, laundry soap, yeast, or cheese on my wife's shopping list would fill me with dismay. Only rarely would these be available in our grocery store, which meant taking mass transportation to several other stores often located kilometers from where we lived. If these stores were not closed for lunch, inventory, repairs, or sanitation, and in the unlikely event that the time I needed was available, there would almost certainly be a long line where I would wait anxiously hoping that the supply would not be exhausted when it was my turn.



Shortages and long lines are only part of the story. For many basic items, there is little variety and inferior quality. Milk, though ostensibly pasteurized and which we kept refrigerated, would turn sour after a day or two. My wife would have to throw out as much as half of the bag of potatoes or carrots which I bought because they were spoiled. For many Soviets, food shopping means trekking to half a dozen different stores, one for milk products, one for breads, one for vegetables, and so forth. Moreover, most stores nearer to the center of the city still operate on a *kassa* system requiring the consumer to stand in three lines: one to order the item, one to pay for it, and one to pick it up.

Still, the worst aspect of daily consumer life in Moscow is the rudëness of service personnel. My periodic excursions to the dry cleaner's — located in the basement of our apartment building — held a particular terror for me. After standing in line with my bundle for thirty minutes, I was instructed to remove all buttons from my clothes. Information about each item was written on a small piece of cloth which I then sewed into a designated area of my pants, shirt, or jacket. The receipt for each piece was then written out at length and in triplicate. Upon payment of about a ruble per item, I received a copy of each receipt and was told to come back in about four days. The whole process rarely took less than forty-five minutes.

Other difficulties of daily life in Moscow, untouched by *perestroika,* are the quantities of paperwork required by a bureaucratic labyrinth that would tax the ingenuity of Theseus. Such simple tasks as sending books to the United States, arranging meetings with other scholars, traveling to other Soviet citites to give lectures, or purchasing our train tickets to Beijing absorbed formidable amounts of time, energy, planning, patience, and, above all, paper. And then there are the restrictions on information resources — including libraries, computers, and xerox machines — and on meeting foreigners, to mention only a few which affected my life. But there are privileges, highly visible ones, like the sleek black Zhils and Chaikas scattering snow and people alike as they zip down the reserved center lanes of broad Moscow boulevards, and the system of special stores with better quality goods for those with diplomatic-ruble checks. There is the *zakaz* system for special orders of otherwise unavailable goods which exists for trade union members in good standing in the workplace, and where the quality of selection varies with rank and position. Who you know remains essential in getting things done in Moscow; those without connections are out of luck.

If, in the Fall in 1984, some soothsayer had predicted that two years later I would witness in the Soviet Union the introduction of competititve elections, that I would ride in a legal private cab, that *Doctor Zhivago* would be published, that Gorbachev would have accepted Reagan's zero-option proposal on intermediate-range missiles, and that I would watch Margaret Thatcher telling millions of Soviet viewers that nuclear weapons are the greatest hope for peace since the coming of Christianity, I would have expressed some skepticism. Yet, all of these things have come to pass. Only the most ardent ideologue can ignore the evidence of change or seek to dismiss it as a pretense whose sole purpose is to lull the West into mistaking the "evil empire" for something it is not.

At the same time, it is important to understand that this new policy is not intended as a retreat from the long-term goal of achieving communism in the Soviet Union. On the contrary, it is proposed as an effort to revitalize a system which had lost its dynamism and revolutionary promise. The term "reconstruction" itself is intended to imply a return to those qualitites of Lenin's leadership which present leaders consider compatible with their goal of modernization and development, namely, tactical flexibility in dealing with problems, an openness toward experimentation, and a degree of tolerance for new ideas. Those who see in *perestroika* a return to capitalism are mistaken. In the minds of Soviet leaders, the question is not of abandoning socialism, but of improving it.

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What strikes this observer most, however, is the tenuousness of a revolution from the top. No one can be sure if the present leadership will stay in power, or that they will continue to pursue the policies they have begun. More significantly, the depth of support in the Soviet Union for the policies of reconstruction is uncertain. Those who are most satisfied are the intelligentsia for whom civil rights, democratization, and freer expression are important; the least satisfied are the members of the party apparatus and the state bureaucracy for whom the reforms pose the threat of a loss in power and position. Naturally those who benefit most from the status quo are the most reluctant to support changes in it.

But for most Soviet citizens, the mood seems to be one of uncertainty. Conversations with cabbies, cooks, and secretaries suggest an attitude ranging from lukewarm enthusiasm to indifference. One woman, when asked her opinion of Gorbachev and *perestroika,* cited an old Russian proverb, "When the dog barks, the wind carries the sound away." For another, *perestroika* meant harder work, the possibility of higher prices, and less vodka — a three-hour wait in line instead of one. For these people, the issues of civil rights, competitive elections, and a freer press are less compelling than the quality of daily life, and it is precisely here that the changes have been least apparent. Unless Gorbachev is able to move effectively to improve conditions at this level, his changes in other areas may not mean very much or last very long. The alternatives are not appealing. For this reason, a good friend of mine, old enough to know the past, and a shrewd observer of the present, confided to me shortly after my arrival, "Jeff, these are dangerous times."

STILL WAITING FOR THE MILLENNIUM

THE CHURCHES & SOVIET 'GLASNOST'

JANICE BROUN

Mr. Gorbachev's basic motivation for *glasnost* is to produce a new-look Soviet society efficient enough to challenge the West. On the religious scene, however, the government has shown little sign of modifying its traditional hostility. Religious belief has proved more resistant than the constant stream of atheist propaganda — which employs hundreds of thousands of people — and there are even signs of a widespread reawakening of religious interest. Roughly 100 million, or one in three of the population, admit to some form of belief in God, while only 19 million Soviet citizens are Communist party members, and many of those belong more for advancement than out of conviction.

Much of the resurgence of belief is linked with the reassertion of national identity, a fact which makes the government doubly suspect. This is particularly the case in the Baltic Republics, in the western Ukraine, in Georgia and Armenia, and in the Muslim republics. Furthermore, a considerable proportion of political dissidents have been motivated in part by their religious beliefs. In a state in which the only legally permitted institutions outside the party are religious ones, certain religious groups have put up an especially determined resistance to state control; these are the Muslims, the Lithuanian Catholics (see box on page 594), the Baptists, and the Pentecostals.

Constitutionally, the church and state are separate in the USSR. In practice, the state keeps strict control and interferes at every level of religious activity. Ecclesiastical leaders (particularly those of the Orthodox church) have been forced to compromise in order to maintain even the most basic church life, and such central institutions as some churches do possess — a clerical hierarchy, administrative offices, periodic synods and facilities (very limited) for training clergy and for publishing — are concessions granted by the authorities for pragmatic reasons. According to 1929 legislation, only *local* religious associations are recognized by the state, and they must be registered. The only legal right they possess is to worship in a specified building. Even that is denied to millions today. Thousands of churches closed during Khruschev's anti-religious campaign and remain unavailable. In Gorki, with its population of 2 million, there is only one small suburban Orthodox church. (Such buildings belong to the state, not the congregations.)

In addition, believers may suffer harassment during worship, whether routinely as do Ukrainian Catholics and unregistered Baptist congregations, or occasionally, as with Orthodox congregations at Easter. This year citizens' militia were present both outside and inside even popular Moscow churches, preventing worshippers from entering or trying to create a disturbance. Permission to repair or rebuild church premises is usually refused. Refusal of registration has also been a key

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element in the repression of groups whose teachings and activities demand too much personal commitment and arouse state disapproval.

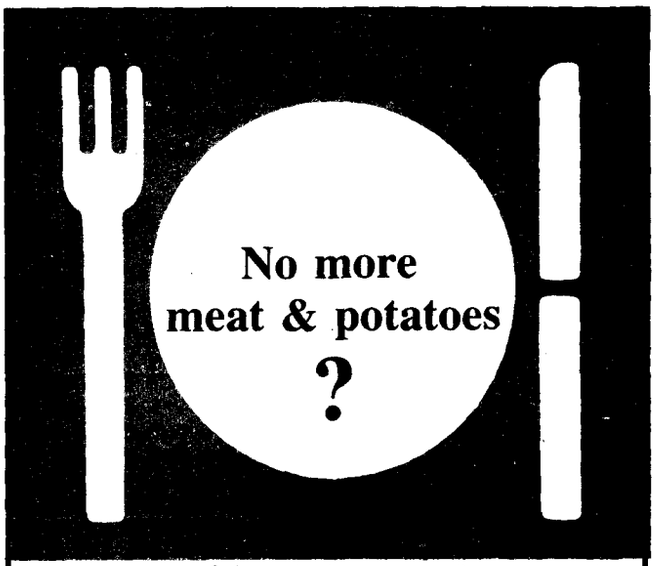
Proselytism, the organized teaching of children, and any activity outside the church building are forbidden. Any believer undertaking what we would consider here to be routine church activities risks penalties of varying severity. People have been imprisoned for organizing study groups, running Sunday schools, providing charitable help for those in prison, or producing and distributing religious literature (a field in which restrictions are particularly tough). Up until this year, the Orthodox church was allowed to print only five small editions of the Bible during the entire period of Soviet rule, and a black-market Bible could fetch over two hundred dollars. But as the August 29 *Tablet* of London reports, a sign that *glasnost* may eventually reach the churches is that the Orthodox church has now been granted permission to print one-hundred-thousand Bibles.

Still the state interferes in the selection, location, and promotion of church personnel. Priests are now merely employees of the parish councils, which are subject to infiltration, and no longer even members of them. Catholic religious orders are banned, while Orthodox communities are so restricted that there are only seven monasteries and ten convents. Believers not only experience restrictions in church, but face discrimination in every other sphere; they are second-class citizens, usually excluded from higher education and responsible professional posts.

The latest annoyance is that the church cannot even canonize saints without state permission. Thus it has been forbidden to canonize the nineteenth-century startsy (spiritual fathers) Macarius and Leonid of Optino monastery for the celebration of the millennium of Christianity in Russia in 1988. This is probably because startsy have continued to play a key role in preserving the faith under Communism. Instead, the church is being forced to canonize the Ukrainian Catholic Havyril Kostelnyuk who, under duress, presided over the uncanonical *Sobor* (church council) of Lvov in 1946, by which the Eastern Rite Catholic church was merged with the Russian Orthodox church. Kostelnyuk was later assassinated by the KGB in order to remove an inconvenient witness to Soviet manipulation of the church.

The current canonization is a politically loaded act, intended to emphasize that the Ukraine is a part of Russia, not a separate nation. The government wished to play down the fact that Russian Christianity originated in the Ukraine, at Kiev, and not in Moscow, and that Catholicism has had a strong influence on it. The continued suppression of the large Ukrainian Catholic church is one of the most blatant examples of injustice in Soviet religious life today.

No one knows for sure how many religious prisoners there are in the Soviet Union today, but Anatoli Sharansky believes there are five to six thousand. About four hundred are known by name to the West. They range from evangelicals, who are



Pick-and-choose, cafeteria, and smorgasbord Catholicism are images suggesting an individualistic, almost offhand approach to making decisions of conscience, one based on personal convenience or taste, if not even whim. This is scarcely fair to millions of Catholics who have often departed from official teachings only reluctantly, after prayer and conscientious reflection, and not before they realized that many fellow Catholics shared the same moral intuitions. They have agonized, they have struggled, they have reached their conclusions not to suit personal convenience but to resolve conflicts they perceived between particular teachings and what seemed to be more central impulses of the Gospel. It would be naive to think that such decisions have never been shortsighted or surreptitiously self-serving. Still, none of the human texture is captured in the consumption images of lunch lines and dinner parties.

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normally sentenced for specifically religious offenses, to dissidents motivated in some part by religion. The former are mostly sentenced for "violation of the laws of the separation of church and state" (Article 142 in the criminal code) or "infringement of the person and rights of citizens under the guise of performing religious rites" (Article 227). The latter are sentenced for "Anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda" (Article 70), or "slandering the state and social system" (Articles 190/1). Many dissidents have come to faith during their incarceration in prison. Psychiatrist Anatoli Koryagin, released this year after serving six years of a fourteen-year sentence for exposing the abuse of his profession, sought baptism as soon as he arrived in the West.

The release of some well-known prisoners in 1986, foremost among whom were Sharansky, Orthodox dissidents Vladimir Poresh and Yuri Orlov, and the brilliant young poetess Irina Ratushinskaya, was a preliminary for the unprecedented release of over 100 dissidents on February 2 this year, a quarter of them Christians. Another 140 have been released since then, though at least 10 who refused to sign statements acceptable to the authorities were returned to camp. This is not to say that only those prepared to compromise were released. Some were able to reword documents so as to satisfy both local KGB officials and their own conscience. Others were released without signing anything. Most were Orthodox dissidents or Pentecostals active in their emigration movement. Many had almost completed their sentences or been the victims of a recent law allowing prisoners to be resentenced in camp for allegedly breaking regulations. Many were so broken in health that the government was glad to be rid of them.

Hopes of a complete amnesty have been dashed. Certain categories of prisoners are excluded, notably those with a previous conviction in "special regime" camps. Out of 100 known prisoners in psychiatric hospitals, only 4 (2 of them Christians) have been released. Likewise, members of the Helsinki Monitoring Groups and advocates of national minority rights have scarcely been affected. People are still being sentenced for religious offenses, though on a reduced scale. Those released reiterate categorically that they cannot regard Gorbachev's intentions as genuine until *every* political and religious prisoner has been freed. No one has been released from Perm, where a sixth of the inmates have died since 1980.

On the plus side however, the notorious Barashevo women's unit was closed after the release of Ratushinskaya, probably because the KGB realized its mistake in throwing the pick of women activists together; despite the most diverse religious and national backgrounds, moral solidarity and faith had drawn them together. Meanwhile, Western protests and publicity campaigns are still valid and necessary.

There are some important signs of a more favorable attitude to religion from a different quarter, the media. Some reports now show a genuine concern for believers and even point out that believers have been treated unjustly in Soviet society. Some individuals, like Father Gleb Yakunin, a leading dissident priest released after nine years imprisonment, are ready to take advantage of this unprecedented access to the media and the more sympathetic atmosphere created by some distinguished establishment writers, to ensure that Gorbachev does not lose sight of the believers' rights issue. While this is not a priority with Gorbachev, many of the intelligentsia he is trying to woo are now Christian. Gorbachev might be persuaded that the churches, granted toleration and more scope, could make a significant contribution to the nation's future. The ultimate success of the economic reforms he has initiated will depend upon the loyalty, incorruptibility, and enterprise of the work force, and on the stability of family life, qualities generally found among believers and notably absent elsewhere. Probably even Mr. Gorbachev doesn't know exactly where he is going, or how far he *can* go, and inertia and bureaucratic

Lithuania, land of the unquenchable wick

One area of the USSR which does not seem likely to benefit from *glasnost* is Lithuania, even though 1987 is the six-hundredth anniversary of the conversion of the nation, and the celebrations have been officially countenanced. The Lithuanian Catholic church is a perpetual headache to the Soviet authorities. It is the only recognized religious body where a large majority of the clergy, with almost total lay support, systematically demands that the state abide by its own constitution and its international obligations. State violations are countered by petitions signed by thousands. Between 1983 and 1986, 559 out of 693 priests, and even two bishops, Julijonas Steponavicius (believed to be a secret cardinal) and Vincentas Sladkevicius (exiled, but reinstated in 1982), have signed protests.

If violations are protested against, restrictions are actively countered. Good men refused entry to the seminary are secretly trained and ordained; 2,400 "underground" nuns are active "in the world"; children are given religious instruction; and in the absence of permission for a church paper, the *Chronicle of the Lithuanian Catholic Church* is now in its fifteenth year of secret printing, being smuggled to the West and being broadcast back into Lithuania by Radio Vatican, with a wealth of detail unprecedented in the Soviet Union.

Lithuanians may have been the last European people to be converted to Christianity, but their tenacity and resourcefulness in maintaining their faith and their national identity put many larger nations to shame. In spite of genocide when the Soviets took over, and unremitting pressure since, 66 percent of the nation (85 percent in 1940) is still Catholic.

Nothing has altered recently. The basic appeals made year after year through bishops, clergy, laity, and the

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resistance will act as brakes on his reforms. They may even bring about his downfall.

It appears that some local authorities are making concessions. Father Yakunin's group reports that in Moscow internal passports no longer have to be produced in some churches before a baptism or a marriage can be performed.

Over the last few years the Orthodox have gained other concessions. There have been modest improvements in the number and training of ordination candidates. The recent reopening of the Danilov monastery in Moscow as a community and publications center, and the forthcoming new edition of one-hundred-thousand copies of the Bible are related to the millennium celebration in 1988. A church *Sobor*, only the fourth under Soviet rule, will be convened. Critics like Father Yakunin fear that these concessions are largely cosmetic, to impress visiting church delegations from abroad. They demand more radical reform, particularly the repeal of the 1929 laws, as a prerequisite for any real improvement in the status of the churches. There have indeed been rumors of a revision of legislation regarding the Orthodox church, but clear information is lacking, since much of Soviet law has never been published. Also, revision must be extended to other churches. The 1988 commemoration could be a suitable occasion for concessions — if the government is prepared to make them.

Chronicle remain unfulfilled, and the events of the recent past are hardly likely to inspire hope or confidence in the government. In February 1986, Father Juozas Zdebskis, a member of the unofficial Catholic Committee for the Defense of Believers' Rights, was killed in the last of several car "accidents." There is no sign of the release of imprisoned priests, nor of the reinstatement from his internal exile (since 1961) of Archbishop Steponavicius. Relations between Petras Anilionis, the government's Commissioner for Religious Affairs, and the church are at a low ebb. In 1986 Anilionis accused the hierarchy of not responding to concessions (help in restoring some of churches, and 500,000 anniversary picture cards); repeatedly ignoring the activities of "extremist" clergy (who constitute a large majority); and failing to discipline them when, for instance, they illegally held services outside their parishes, led pilgrimages, or preached "political" sermons (they had done nothing to prevent former prisoners like Niole Sadunaite or the late Petras Paulitis from preaching).

The main object of Anilionis's wrath, however, was a relatively new member of the hierarchy Juozas Preiska. As head of the official commission for the six-hundredth anniversary celebrations, he had demanded that the occasion should be marked by the return of Vilnius Cathedral (now an art gallery), St. Casimir's, Vilnius (a museum of atheism), and the Queen of Peace Church, Klaipeda (a concert hall since its erection in 1960). Klaipeda, a coastal town of two-hundred-thousand, has only a tiny church to serve them. Preiska and the other bishops were warned that if they continued these "impossible demands, together with the extremists," the Commission would be dissolved, local celebrations forbidden, and the Bibles promised for this year might not appear (last printing: twelve-thousand copies in 1972). But in July, *Tass* reported that Queen of Peace Church would be transferred to believers sometime in the next two years.

A papal visit in the anniversary year was of course quashed, and Lithuania made a "no-go" area for ranking clergy and official outside groups wanting to join the celebrations. All bishops and clergy were kept in strict "quarantine" and not allowed to travel to Rome, although in fact Bishop Liudas Povilionis *was* allowed to go in February, possibly as a result of Western publicity on the ban. The pope is still keen on making a visit to Lithuania and insists that visiting Lithuania would be a prerequisite for his presence in the USSR next year celebrating the millennium of Christianity there. Some tough bargaining is in prospect.

Out of forty Lithuanian religious prisoners, nine were released this year. But a detailed analysis is revealing: Vladas Lapienis is eighty. Jaduyga Bielauskiene was a Barashevo inmate, due to start her exile. Antanas Terlec had served seven of his eight years. Vytautas Skuodis, the first lay member of the Catholic Committee and in exile for seven of the last twelve years, and Doctor Algirdas Statkevicius, in psychiatric hospital since 1980, are both American citizens. Henrikas Jaskunas, in prison since 1975, was broken and wrote a denunciation of fellow prisoners. Algirdas Patackas had not yet been tried.

None of the three priests in prison was released. One, Father Jonas Matulionis, is currently in hospital; Fathers Alfonsas Svarinskas and Sigitas Tamkevicius, active members of the Catholic Committee serving ten-year sentences, refused to sign recantations and were returned to camp. The founder of the Lithuanian Helsinki Monitoring Group, Viktoras Petkus, was sentenced to fifteen years in 1978. He has also refused to recant. Balys Gajauskas, who had already served a twenty-five-year sentence (he was resentenced in 1977 to fifteen years for disbursing aid to prisoners and translating Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* into Lithuanian) remains in prison.

Catholics defiantly declared the last week of May this year as a time of prayer for these determined prisoners. A group appeal for the reinstatement of Archbishop Steponavicius was turned down in March. So there is little sign of change in the religious scene in Lithuania.

J.B.

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WILL 'GLASNOST' REACH THE JEWS?

GORBACHEV & SOVIET ANTI-SEMITISM

NORA LEVIN

As Christian communities here and in the Soviet Union look forward to next year's millennial celebration of the Russian Orthodox church, the Jewish issue seems very marginal to those events. Numerically, Soviet Jews are a tiny segment of the Soviet population, under 3 million. And their religious association is not to the old respected tradition of Russian Orthodoxy, but to a reviled and persecuted Judaism. We would have to go very far back in history, indeed to pre-Russian history, to find a congenial time for Jews on Russian soil. Records left by historians of Armenia and Georgia tell us that Jewish settlements appeared in the Caucasus and in Transcaucasia soon after the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E., and that by the end of the fourth century B.C.E., cities of Armenia had large Jewish populations. In the Crimea, more than two thousand years ago, there were also well-organized Jewish communities. A powerful kingdom of the Khazars flourished between the seventh and tenth centuries, and sometime around 750 C.E., the king and many of the inhabitants embraced Judaism. For a brief time, Jews were held in high esteem by nearby peoples and Jewish life prospered even as far as Kiev. But after Vladimir's conversion, conditions changed. Jews were looked upon as a competing, rival faith community, both hated and feared. When some prominent Russians converted to Judaism, the so-called "Judaizing heresy" intensified anti-Jewish feeling which has persisted throughout Russian history. Under Soviet communism, although there have been a few cycles of benign encouragement of Jewish culture in the Soviet mold, cumulative assaults on Jewish institutions, political and intellectual leaders, books and presses, and on Judaism have made the very survival of Soviet Jewry problematic. As a result of this bleak outlook, most Western Jews have seen emigration as the only solution to the problem of Soviet Jewish survival.

The great American Jewish anxiety about Soviet Jewry has been conditioned by the Holocaust: the evidence that Jews were abandoned to their tragic fate, that little was done to save European Jewry during World War II. Jews are now determined to do everything possible to prevent the destruction of Jewish life elsewhere. "Never again," we say. This determination was bound up with the creation of the State of Israel, and with a sense that centuries of Jewish powerlessness were finally over. We believed, naively, that with this new power, Jews would be secure everywhere. The American Jewish deference to Israel also grew out of fears for Israel's security and survival. Domestically, we needed to articulate Jewish issues and press the American government to concern itself with them.

Since the 1950s, the period of the Cold War, as the Soviet Union took a more aggressive pro-Arab position and the United States a more pro-Israeli position (and as we learned more and more of Soviet oppression of Jews), the Jewish reliance on the American government to defend Soviet Jewish rights has become stronger. The predicament of Soviet Jews today involves the inheritance from czarist Russia of many centuries of anti-Semitism and residual nationality problems which the Soviet Union has not been able to resolve, specifically, in the case of Jews, inner contradictions and inconsistencies in Soviet ideology regarding the status of Jewish nationality and culture in a Marxist, secular society. No Soviet ideologue has undertaken a review or elaboration of Lenin's condemnation of anti-Semitism, or of his ideas regarding minority cultural rights and his strong warnings against Great Russian chauvinism.

Since 1917, the issue of Jewish nationality has been entangled in shifting Soviet formulations of domestic and foreign policy needs, or, as some scholars have viewed it, strategic as against tactical considerations. The long-term strategy is aimed at complete assimilation into a Soviet proletarian culture, and, thus, the elimination of any Jewish or other identifiable culture. However, there have been many tactical shifts in Soviet policy involving the promotion of Jewish non-religious cultural and organizational projects, including Yiddish schools, theaters, publications, and Yiddish-speaking soviets — all in the Soviet mold, all receiving official support, and indicating continuity of Jewish culture. In the 1920s, for example, there were highly successful Jewish farm

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settlements in the Ukraine, White Russia, and the Crimea. Almost three hundred thousand Jews worked on the land in Jewish colonies until the brutal collectivization drive destroyed them. Later there was a highly publicized, officially endorsed autonomous Jewish region called Birobidzhan, but it, too, was swept away by the murderous purges and trials of 1936-38. During World War II, Stalin created an expedient called the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee to rally Jews to the Soviet war effort and mobilize the financial and moral support of American Jews in behalf of the Soviet Union during the war against Nazi Germany. This committee also served as an important organizational and cultural center for Soviet Jews and aroused new hopes that there would be a future for Jewish culture in the Soviet Union. But these hopes, too, were shattered during the so-called "Black Years" from 1948 to 1953, when hundreds of intellectual leaders were executed, many thousands sent to the Gulag, and all cultural forms of expression destroyed. Just before his death, Stalin concocted the notorious "Doctors' Plot," in which Jewish physicians were accused of having murdered Soviet leaders and of planning to murder Stalin himself. Massive deportations of all Soviet Jews to Siberia were about to start when Stalin died in March 1953.

Today, all channels of Jewish expression have been officially closed down, with the exception of some synagogues, which are used mainly by old Jews, one Yiddish journal, and a few musical and dramatic touring groups — mostly amateur. Yet, ironically, the legal category "Jewish nationality" has remained and finds expression in all official Soviet publications that deal with nationalities. An individual born of Jewish parents has been formally considered a Jewish national since 1932 when a new internal passport system was adopted. A Jew in the Soviet Union is in fact a juridically defined person who is part of the Jewish nationality. The legal criterion is the simple biological fact of having been born of Jewish parents, i.e., of parents who consider themselves Jews. This identification is noted in the Soviet internal passport, marked *Evrei* — Jew.

The passport is a document every citizen must carry. For many Jews, this identification has led to discrimination in the allocation of apartments, jobs, promotions, and in admission to universities. Moreover, the intensified anti-Semitism in Soviet society in recent years has persuaded many Jews to intermarry so that their children may possibly escape the stigma and often physical abuse of being a Jew. Some Jews have had their Jewish-sounding names changed on their passports. As for the Jewish population as a whole, it is legally a distinct nationality in the USSR, and thus theoretically entitled to enjoy a complex of national rights and equality of rights inscribed in Soviet laws, the federal constitution, the constitutions of the individual republics, and international conventions, including guarantees of the Helsinki accords. However, after almost seventy years of Soviet transformations, although the Jew has become more and more negatively visible, Jewish culture has been virtually obliterated and the Jewish past erased. The 1970 edition of the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* reduced centuries of Jewish history and culture to two columns of print. This development is in marked contrast with the Jewish experience in other Communist countries, such as Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Hungary.

Since the early 1950s, a vehement Soviet anti-Israel and anti-Zionist drive has paralleled a harsh propaganda drive against Judaism. It has featured some of the most vulgar and frightening anti-Semitic books of all time, books which have gone through many printings and have been awarded official prizes. Since 1967, Soviet Middle East policy has become more aggressively pro-Arab and anti-Israel, and Soviet propaganda has increasingly linked its crusade against Judaism and Jewish national identity with Zionism and Israel. It is of course possible to be anti-Zionist without being anti-Semitic, but Soviet propaganda has to a large extent blurred the distinction. Jews are presented in cartoons and caricatures with racial features reminiscent of Nazi propaganda. Pictorially, Zionists appear as poisonous mushrooms, serpents, and satanic figures — images that are all too familiar in classical anti-Semitism. Moreover, the sins of Zionists are supposed to derive from the teachings of Judaism, and Zionism now is equated with Nazism, fascism, moral degeneracy, racism, and the Jewish conspiracy to control the world. Judaism is compared to "the fundamentals of jungle law." The Torah is described as "an unsurpassed textbook of blood thirstiness, hypocrisy, treachery, perfidy, and moral degeneracy." The Jewish belief in the coming of the Messiah is intended to "establish Jewish hegemony over the people of the entire world." "The racist concept of Judaism served as a prototype of European racism."

These ideas constitute a drumbeat in newspapers, periodicals, TV shows, radio broadcasts, and large printings of the works of anti-Jewish writers such as Yuri Ivanov, Lev Korneyev, Vladimir Begun, Trofim Kichko, and others. These materials have now also spread throughout the Eastern bloc, the Arab world, and third-world countries.

The Soviet attack on the Hebrew language since the early 1920s is perhaps the most incomprehensible of all anti-Jewish measures. In the Soviet Union, Hebrew is an outlawed language. Non-Jewish Soviet linguistic scholars, theologians, and diplomats — even KGB agents — study it, but Jews may not.

The usual Soviet constraints on religious activity apply to Judaism, but because only Jews practice Judaism, the restrictions have been particularly heavy. The Jewish religion remains the only registered denomination which is not permitted to maintain regular links with co-religionists outside of the USSR. There have been no new registered Jewish religious communities in twenty-five years. Western Jews who attend Soviet synagogues are carefully watched and often searched, and Soviet Jews who speak to them are at risk. There has been a long-standing shortage of prayer books, Bibles, Jewish calendars and religious objects, and when they are brought in by Western visitors, they are often confiscated.

It is estimated that there are only fifty-five synagogues — actually, simple prayer meeting places, for the most part — for

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a population of almost 3 million. Very few young Jews attend synagogue except during the high holy days. If they come to regular services, they are stigmatized and often punished. Yet there has been a religious reawakening among some young Soviet Jewish students who pray and study in small groups in private apartments. Some young parents have tried to set up classes for children, but the persecution of these Jews has been very severe. Jews have no central religious body or facilities for training rabbis. Thus the future of Judaism in the Soviet Union is very bleak.

We are all familiar with the struggle of some Soviet Jews to leave the Soviet Union, largely out of their frustration in their search to be Jews — to learn about Jewish religious customs, Jewish history and literature, Jewish life abroad — and because of anti-Jewish hostility. From 1968 to 1980, about two-hundred-sixty-thousand Jews have been allowed to leave, but despite the Helsinki guarantees regarding freedom to emigrate, emigration has virtually stopped until recently. It is estimated that up to four-hundred-thousand Jews have requested permission to leave. Many of these have faced harsh repercussions for even beginning this process. Another twelve to fifteen thousand are so-called refuseniks — those who have been denied permission to leave many times. Some are in prison, camps, psychiatric hospitals. All are treated as social outcasts, isolated, often without work. Many despair of any change.

What of the others — perhaps 2.5 million? Not all Soviet Jews want to leave or will be able to if they want to. These Jews are sometimes spoken of as a silent majority. About 75 percent of them live in the heartland of Russia — in those areas which have been under Soviet rule for more than two generations. They are overwhelmingly urban, better educated than non-Jews about them, and concentrated in technical-cultural-scientific occupations, described as upper socio-economic levels in Soviet terms. More than a half million of them live in Moscow, Odessa, Kiev, and Leningrad. They have tried to cluster in professional or occupational groups. About two hundred thousand are members of the Communist party. The demographic profile is that of an aging population with a low birth rate and quite a high rate of intermarriage and cultural assimilation.

Since the end of the war, they have been excluded from positions in defense, foreign policy, the courts, national security organs, party and government. And in recent years, there has been a sharp drop in the number of Jewish university students and graduate students, and declining opportunities in high level scientific and cultural fields. Facing obvious and growing discriminatory competition for advancement, some Soviet Jews must lower their own aspirations, or, they can seek a place in new development projects and scientific institutions in the cities of Siberia, such as Yakutsk. More and more Jewish youngsters, facing a hostile environment and even abusive anti-Semitism, are applying to technical institutes and universities in Siberia and Asiatic Russia.

The emigration movement itself seems to have injured the condition of those left behind in ways that were not anticipated. In approaching this problem, we must first note that Soviet authorities have been caught in a fundamental contradiction. They have permitted many Germans, Poles, Armenians, and Greeks to leave on the basis of repatriation or reunification of families — without undermining the status of those who remain. In the case of the Jews, however, because of Soviet hostility to Israel — which is considered an agent of American imperialism — Soviet Jews have become hostages. Jews are often perceived and described as disloyal, unreliable, even traitorous. These official descriptions fill the media and harm those Jews who feel that the Soviet Union is their home, who love the Russian language, and have made Russian culture their own, despite difficulties. In many cases, in fact, the parents of refuseniks are themselves members of the CP who refuse to give permission to their own children to leave.

It is difficult to gauge the extent of interest in Jewish culture among this so-called silent majority, but we know that among them are some who join other Jews at synagogues at Simchat Torah; who come in flocks to the Moscow Book Fairs to look at books of Jewish interest; who attend performances of the traveling Yiddish musical and dramatic troupes. Visitors have reported small groups struggling to observe Orthodox Judaism. Some may also be learning Yiddish or Hebrew.

Over the years, since the death of Stalin and increasingly in the past fifteen years, all manner of Western intercessions and pressures — private and public — have been tried, to have some vestiges of Jewish culture restored. These efforts have been largely futile. Virtually all meaningful Jewish cultural and religious life has been forced underground. Can one hope for changes improving the Jewish condition under Gorbachev? Perhaps. Some of us feel heartened by the evidence of greater cultural and economic loosening in the Soviet Union — as a result of Gorbachev's policy of "openness." There are a number of encouraging signs. The Soviet literary establishment, for example, has permitted publication of Akhmatova's great poem "Requiem," which for years was the underground anthem of those who suffered under Stalin, and publication of Pasternak's novel *Doctor Zhivago*. The literary journal *Znamya* has published previously censored verses by Yevtushenko. The poet Andrei Voznesensky has been appointed to head a commission that would restore Boris Pasternak to his proper place in Russian poetry. A major show of Marc Chagall's works has opened in Moscow, and his home in Vitebsk is to be restored as a museum.

Films that were formerly banned have now been released, including Aleksander Askoldov's *Commissar*, a film which gives a sympathetic portrayal of a Jewish family and indicts anti-Semitism. An important Russian-Yiddish dictionary that was to have been published thirty-five years ago has recently been issued. Rabbi Arthur Schneier, director of the Foundation for Conscience, has received permission to send five-thousand Bibles and five-thousand prayer books to the Soviet

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Union. Two young Soviet Jews are said to have permission to attend the Rabbinical Seminary in Budapest.

There also seems to be a fair possibility that the names of some of the early leaders of the Revolution, such as Bukharin, even Trotsky, may be "rehabilitated." A long-suppressed 1962 play called *The Peace Treaty of Brest-Litovsk*, which portrays Bukharin and Trotsky as devoted associates of Lenin, will open this fall, for the seventieth anniversary of the Revolution. Gorbachev himself has asked that "forgotten names and blank spots" in Soviet history be filled in. Conceivably, some of these spots would include early Jewish Bolshevik leaders who contributed much to the consolidation of the regime.

Gorbachev seems to recognize the need for the expression of a diversity of groups and interests. There have already been debates on television, complaints of citizens in the press, conflicting approaches to current social and economic problems, and a new atmosphere away from homogeneity and uniformity. At the 1987 Central Committee Plenum, Gorbachev criticized what he called a "schematic and dogmatic approach" to party ideology. He has called for greater participation at the grass-roots level and more local initiatives. But so far he has not addressed any of the issues so important to Soviet Jews, especially the reality of anti-Semitism, and cultural, religious, and emigration rights. Moreover, we must be aware that his interpretation of democracy is not ours.

Of very deep and immediate concern is the anti-Semitic agenda of a nationalist group called *Pamiat* (Memory), organized in 1980 by officials of the Soviet Ministry of Civil Aviation. Members have close ties to the Soviet army and the arms industries, and have support of scientific bodies and academic centers such as the Moscow Mathematical Institute. The group's stated aim is to protect old buildings, monuments, and other objects of Russia's cultural heritage, but it is considered to be a dangerously chauvinistic, anti-Semitic organization. Critics claim that *Pamiat* uses anti-Semitism for internal political ends. Like the Nazis, members subscribe to the "conspiracy" theory of the notorious forgery, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, and blame Jews for everything, from destroying Russian culture to the Chernobyl disaster. Although some Soviet journalists have criticized *Pamiat*, the lax official attitude toward it so far has caused some Jews to fear a pogrom atmosphere. Gorbachev himself has not reacted to *Pamiat's* threats.

With a few exceptions, the mainline Soviet Jewry advocacy organizations in the United States have viewed Gorbachev's "reform" program skeptically, or cynically. We have witnessed too many deceptions and disappointments in Soviet history. However, under Gorbachev, Jewish emigration figures have increased, all of the Jewish prisoners of conscience, except Alexei Magarik, have been released, and six young Soviet Jews will be allowed to study for ordination at rabbinical seminaries in the United States. Some Jewish leaders are now calling for Soviet participation in Middle East peace talks, and Israeli Foreign Minister Peres has had significant talks with Soviet officials about the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries, which have been broken since 1967. Were this to happen, it is possible that conditions of life for Soviet Jews would improve. But not necessarily.

In the past, Soviet Jews have been pushed onto the tilting chessboard of American-Soviet diplomacy. They have been used as counters in American-Soviet negotiations, and their fate has been subject to the whims and interests of the two superpowers. In this regrettable process, Soviet and Western Jews have depended upon the American government for leverage in gaining Soviet concessions for Jewish emigration, while little has been achieved in reducing internal anti-Semitism, or gaining larger cultural, and religious opportunities for Soviet Jews who do not emigrate. Serious questions are now being raised about this past reliance on the American government and involvement in Soviet-American confrontational policy. While we don't know all of the elements that contribute to Soviet anti-Semitism, it is possible that an easing of Jewish anti-Soviet approaches may ease the condition of Soviet Jews.

It seems to me that the time has come when American Jewry must fully join the struggle to foster détente and reconciliation, to encourage religious, cultural, and educational exchanges, to strive for nuclear disarmament. Some movement along these lines is already taking place in Jewish organizations. To date, there has been some conflict between those who advocate the airing of human rights abuses and those on missions of peace and reconciliation. Soviet officials argue that human rights issues are internal matters, yet there should be a way of discussing the issues of rights and peace together. As long as they remain compartmentalized, we remain skeptical of Gorbachev's "openness." At the same time, we may hope that his call for a "multiplicity of voices" may bring relief and reassurance to the many millions in the Soviet Union — Jews as well as non-Jews — who have suffered intellectual, political, and religious persecution.

ART

DISPELLING CLOUDS

THE SISTINE CHAPEL COMES UNGLUED

We have all been told that our century has sacrificed the present and the past on the altars of the future, that an unhealthy appetite for progress has caused us to lose sight of the important things in life. Yet, the very forces that drive us forward, that desire to know all things with precision, have enabled us to appreciate the past in newer and fuller ways. One of the worthiest services that science has rendered to the humanities has been the preserving and restoring of earlier art. It is almost as though, to

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invoke an image dear to the Old Masters, our restorers have gone forth like so many Saint Georges in defense of beauties ravished by the dragon Time.

But as often as they have performed these services in the name of immediacy of aesthetic response, there have been those who accused them of "skinning" their subjects alive, of wreaking untold and irreversible damage upon defenseless old paintings. This controversy has mounted to a rare fury in recent months, as the restorers of the Sistine Chapel inch ever closer to The Creation, upon whose restoration they are about to embark. If the restorers were to add some injurious substance, opponents argue, or to remove some valuable coating that Michaelangelo had intended to be there, would it not constitute for all of humanity a partial but irretrievable loss of some part of its very self? With the possible exception of the Mona Lisa, the depiction of The Creation must rank as the most immediately recognizable form in the Western world's collective repertory of images. The athletically sculpted arm of Adam, extending toward the hand of God, has slipped into our heads at such an early age that most of us cannot recall a time when we have not known it. So integral has it become to our self- definition, that any change in it, even carried out with the most exact science, threatens permanently to uproot and dislocate something very deep within us. This is what James Beck of Columbia believes, and he is seconded by a dozen or so American artists, among them Robert Motherwell and the late Andy Warhol, who this past year signed a petition calling for at least a pause in the restoration, if not a complete abandonment of the whole project.

The issue touches upon some of the more arcane points of physics and chemistry, about a layer of glue that covers the ceiling which, some argue, Michaelangelo intended as a protection, and which others feel certain to have been put there by unsophisticated restorers in the century after the Chapel's completion. Doctor Walter Persegati, secretary and treasurer of the Vatican Museums, Professor Laura Mora of the Istituto Centrale del Restauro, and Paul Swartzbaum of the International Center for Conservation in Rome, accept the latter contention. They believe that the glue was a later and temporary solution to the dust that had gathered on the ceiling which had the momentary effect of making the frescoes stand out more clearly, but which in the long term covered them over with a steadily deeping layer of grime. Professor Mora developed a solution called AB-57 to combat this, and it has been shown to work in some of the other portions of the Chapel such as the frescoes of Matteo da Lecce. There had been some fear that this cleansing agent would have a deleterious effect on those portions of the surface that were painted "*a secco*" rather than "*buon fresco*." But such fears have been allayed since a great majority of the ceiling and of The Last Judgment was carried out in *buon fresco* technique, rather than *a secco*, a distinction which means essentially that the surface can be far more readily restored, and is in much better condition than was believed by the more vociferous opponents of the restoration. Indeed, the case has been made that the addition of the glue not only does not protect the paintings, but is injurious to them. "Not to have acted upon this knowledge," wrote M. Kirby Talley, Jr., an expert on restoration, "would have condemned the Sistine fresco to a slow but certain death."

That something had to be done was, and should have been, realized long ago. Although The Last Judgment and the Sistine ceiling constitute perhaps the noblest undertaking in all of art, it is unlikely that many people can now look at either with any immediate aesthetic satisfaction. While they can understand intellectually the historical importance of the Chapel — and the eye can alight here and there upon faded traces of the Chapel's greatness — four-and-a-half centuries of dust and the smoke of pontifical tapers have placed a hellish gloom even over the depictions of Paradise.

To those who have become accustomed to the muted tones of the statuesque figures, which seem to approach the grey of granite, the chromatic riot which the restorers have revealed is apt to appear most unwelcome. The die-hard opponents of the restoration cannot accept that Michaelangelo could have been so lavish, let alone so eccentric a colorist. Surely, it is believed, the restorers must have made a colossal, tasteless mistake.

That Michaelangelo was a great colorist rebuts much of what critics and art historians have always taught and the public has always believed. Michaelangelo has been cast traditionally as the champion of disegno, i.e., of pure outline, of contour purged of any trace of that full-bodied fleshiness that is ascribed to Titian and his followers. There is some grain of truth in this dualism, but surely it is outweighed by the vast disservice it does to Michaelangelo's reputation. Most of the admirers of the artist whom they take to be Michaelangelo, have merely been enchanted with a pall of grime cast over, and concealing, his genius, a visual interference which, it seems necessary to add, has nothing to do with his own intentions. It is almost as though, heretofore, we have seen the ceiling through sun-glasses which we are now cordially invited by the restorers to remove.

The second misapprehension requires us to suppose that because the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, which was painted from 1508 to 1512, was one of the crowning glories of the High Renaissance, it cannot have had anything to do with the long Mannerist phase of painting that began around 1520. It is widely known that Michaelangelo provided the figurative patterns that were used in Mannerism and long after, but it is rarely if ever understood that Michaelangelo's color schemes also had an effect almost as influential as his figures. The colors of Mannerism, with all the phosphorescent shimmer of rainbows, the shocking misalliances of purples, pinks, and yellows, had to come from somewhere, and now, at last, we know their source. In the Sistine ceiling, as we are in a position to see for the first time, Michaelangelo created an abstract chromaticism which liberated colors from an exact correspondence to reality and paved the way for Mannerism. The colors, not only the figures, that we see in Raphael, Parmagianino, and the Carracci, are displayed on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel.

When the restorations of the Sistine Chapel are complete,

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almost five hundred years will have elapsed since the project was initiated. In a sense, it is almost unfair that each succeeding generation of humanity has more art to consider and appreciate than its predecessors had, not just because new works are constantly being created, but also because the art of the past is being unearthed, or restored to its pristine state after centuries of corrosion. It is hard now to imagine the world before Michaelangelo and Shakespeare, and easy to appreciate how fortunate we are to have succeeded them, rather than they us. With slightly less gratitude we should consider our good fortune at having been born into a generation which, for the first time in centuries, will have seen this particular achievement of our species reborn. What the restorers of the Vatican have done is to retrieve what was slipping away, to vivify something that was dying.

JAMES GARDNER

James Gardner writes on the arts for Commentary, New Criterion, *and the* New Leader.

SCREEN

TERMS OF COMMITMENT

'DARK EYES' & 'BABY BOOM'

Dark Eyes features a remarkable performance by Marcello Mastroianni as Romano, an aging Italian Don Juan; it earned a Best Actor award at Cannes this year. But the film's other fine features (and one bad one) have been lost in the fuss over its superstar. First, Mastroianni's co-star, Russian actress Elena Sofonova, magnificently portrays a beautiful Chekovian heroine; she's Anna—the frail, sensitive, frustrated, and alluring "Lady with the Little Dog" from Chekov, several of whose stories have been combined to make the screenplay.

Second, Director Nikita Mikhalkov has expertly mixed diverse settings to adapt the sources. The first half of the film takes place in posh spas and villas in northern Italy, and uses veteran European stars like Sylvia Mangano as Romano's rich, stormy wife and Marthe Keller as his comically mischievous mistress; the latter half is set in the woods and fields of rural (supposedly pre-revolutionary) Russia. It is hard to believe that there are landscapes as green as these anywhere on earth. The shots of this hidden world, photographed by one who loves it, are alone worth the price of several admissions.

But Mikhalkov's first half seems dramatically slow, and one tires at times of the endless languors of the pre-World War One Italian upper class, the breathless glances across elegant concert rooms, and the fainéant Romano with his halfhearted wenching and halfwitted buffoonery. The main dramatic interest derives from the flashback structure in which Mikhalkov sets up a much older Romano, eyes haggard and face drooping, recalling his youth and bygone naughtiness. Mastroianni's versatility and the superb work of the makeup crew saved the film at several points.

But once Anna enters, the annoying routine of Romano's whimsy finds a fit dramatic contrast: at the spa where he runs away from his wife, he becomes Anna's knight errant. Dressed in a sparkling white suit, he walks into a a pool of steamy mud just to retrieve her hat which has been blown away by a breeze. It's a signature gesture, symbolic not just of his flamboyance but talent for the grand gesture and gesturing. When Anna runs away from him to return to a heartless husband, leaving a note explaining how she fears genuine love, Romano takes off after her, using as an excuse a scheme to start a modernized glass factory in her backward homeland. The sight of Mastroianni carrying a sheet of glass through St. Petersburg is both hilariously absurd, and, like the mud swim, richly symbolic.

Once in Russia, this film soars, no doubt because of the source of both story and screenplay. Mikhalkov, half brother of Andrei Konchalovksy (*Duet for One*, *Runaway Train*), is one of many talented Russians directors, some of them exiles, some of them now breathing the fresh air of *glasnost* on home soil. (This fall, other Russian films produced and relased under Gorbachev will also make their way here.) Mikhalkov's father wrote the lyrics to the Russian national anthem, one of the few genuinely beautiful elements in the Soviet patriotic machine. His own intense lyricism in and about film was first evident in the poignant *Slave of Love* (1976), a tragicomic tale of filmmakers during in the Red/White Civil War.

In *Dark Eyes*, Mikhalkov also takes a lively, bittersweet look at his native land. Romano's first adventures provide a quirky satire on Russian tendencies to bureaucracy, bumptiousness, and bacchanal. Suspicion of the foreigner is such that no officials will sign his passport to travel inland, nor explain why they will not, until a local aristocrat (played with the utter aplomb of a mini-czar by Oleg Tabakov) silently, ceremoniously, condescends to help out. Arriving inland, Romano is greeted with muscularly literal open arms by a loud, progress-drunk marshal of the nobility, then is caroused with kvass and serenaded into a stupor by a wild gypsy band. For all the comedy, no Russian watching the film could miss the topical references. Mikhalkov also includes a Russian ecologist who at first complains about Romano's plan to start the factory, then aids him when he realizes the Italian's real goal is true love. There is no anachronism: the ecologist is named Konstantin, a stand-in for Tolstoy's hero in *Anna Karenina*, an earlier episode in the longstanding Russian debates about progress and "Westernization."

Mikhalkov's film, for all the notation of domestic failings and foibles, also stands in a long Russian tradition of passing judgment on things foreign. Romano finds Anna, who flees from him to pray before a shimmering icon; when he pursues her into a chicken coop next to her husband's mansion, they make wild love in a whirlwind of scattered feathers. But the Latin lover is not able to follow impetuosity with commitment. Back home for a divorce, he slumps his shoulders in surrender

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to his wife and retreats again into his loveless marriage (which soon falls apart again).

A surprise conclusion provides a richly surprising but traditionally Russian verdict on Romano's sexual frivolity. Here, over Mikhalkov's shoulders peer not just Chekhov or Tolstoy, but Dostoevsky (with his hatred of Rome) and perhaps Solzhenitsyn (with his hatred of the West) and their common inspiration, Pushkin, who first satirized cosmopolitanism in *Eugene Onegin*. Explaining his inability to keep in touch with Anna, Romano declares, "This is the twentieth century! Who thinks of others?" Not by accident, his last sight of Anna's home town is the old wooden church from the days of the Viking Russ. The photography here isn't political but anthropological. In all Russian mythmaking, one must be with "the others"; no one tainted by individualism can enter their kingdom.

Mikhalkov has said that his work is influenced by Fellini, and the influence shows, sometimes destructively, in the first half of this film. Fortunately, like his great Russian literary grandmasters, he views irony ironically.

Baby Boom is so perfect an artifice that it is hard to review as a film. It isn't designed, but calibrated, a 99.9 percent pure iconographic video. It stars Diane Keaton as a super Yuppie New York business woman (first in her class at Yale, MBA at Harvard, feared as "the Tiger Lady" among investement bankers) who inherits an infant by last will and testament of her one relative. The plot eschews girl-meets-boy (although later that, too, happens, with Sam Shepherd as a Vermont vet), for career-girl-meet-baby, hates-baby, tries-to-dispose-of-baby, and finally (who could have guessed it?) falls in love with same, loses fast track job, runs away to the country, discovers true self, et cetera. *Baby Boom* feminizes Dustin Hoffman's role in *Kramer vs. Kramer*, then splices it wholesale with *The Secret of My Success*.

The film raises a serious issue: a woman can, if she chooses, grittily combine motherhood and career success. Such a theme deserves better than the mildly amusing treatment it gets here. The problem isn't the predictability of every twist of plot but the regimentation of every petty detail into slick formula. Start with the stereotypes of New York and Vermont (even the color patterns of sheets and furniture); add the offensive cartoon of potential adoptive parents from the Middle West; throw in the trite insults to religion. When Keaton escapes to Vermont, surprise, it's autumn; snow falls and (*mirabile dictu*) the roof falls in and the heating fails. Life gets desperate until Shepherd turns up. Spring blooms and bunny rabbits play on lawns, a tulip bed sprouts. The film's content celebrates individuality, but the style suppresses idiosyncracy at every turn. After a while, I ached to see one thing out of place.

The oddity, when it became clear, fit like a glove. The only mistake in *Baby Boom* is that Keaton's child never ages. The film coincides with the new ABC show on Yuppie parents, *Thirtysomething*, and follows *Raising Arizona*. To avoid the appearance of a trend, Paramount has held back a similar movie, *She's Having a Baby*. *Baby Boom*'s weird, wonderful mistake reveals that such films have less to do with the reality of parenthood than with its demography.

TOM O'BRIEN

BOOKS

The spectacle of a literary craftsman

EVELYN WAUGH
THE EARLY YEARS 1903-1939
Martin Stannard
W. W. Norton, $24.95, 537 pp.

Neville Braybrooke

Evelyn Waugh once acknowledged his debt to William Gerhardie in these words: "As no doubt you realized, I learned a great deal of my trade from your novels." It was a gracious and a generous admission. He was of course using the term trade with the medieval guild system in mind. By the same token he regarded himself as an artist craftsman, and in 1936, in the columns of *The Tablet*, he extended the same definition to P.G. Wodehouse. "A first-rate craftsman" was his summing up. Volume one of Martin Stannard's projected two-volume life of Evelyn Waugh covers the period 1903 to 1939.

At Lancing and Oxford, Evelyn showed no signs of wanting to follow his father and elder brother into the world of letters. In 1928 when he brought out his study of Rossetti, he referred to it as no more than a text elucidating certain aesthetic principles about craftsmanship. It was not, he emphasized to Harold Acton, a work of literature. Waugh, it seems in retrospect, drifted into authorship: "I held out until I was twenty-four . . . than I was sucked under." The reason was money.

As a penniless schoolmaster he saw no future for himself and his alternative choice, which was to design furniture, would involve a long apprenticeship. Besides, he had fallen in love with the Hon. Evelyn Gardner — the niece of Lord

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Carnarvon — and an income was a necessity if he was to marry her. The opening pages of *Decline and Fall* had already been favorably tried out on contemporaries and within two months he completed the novel. Although the task had proved easier than he had supposed, he still looked back with nostalgia to the days which he had spent under a brilliant and dedicated cabinet-maker. With what pleasure he had watched him cut concealed dovetails. In January 1930, on the eve of a trip abroad, he told a reporter that he hoped to come back with sufficient sketches to mount an exhibition in the summer and, if it was successful, abandon writing for good.

Waugh was a master at handling the press and a keen publicity-seeker. He was not beyond reviewing his own books — *Labels*, for instance — and when discussing the work of other novelists would sometimes introduce his own name as a means of self-advertisement. But in the company of friends he was modest about his achievements, preferring instead to talk about theirs. He was also responsible for many hidden acts of kindness to fellow authors. With the critics it was different: they existed to be baited and needed to be kept in their place. So, too, did the television presenters.

In 1960, when he was finally persuaded to appear on television and asked by his interviewer why he did so, his reply was pointed and brief — "Poverty." At his bank he was constantly overdrawn and he often relied on his literary agent to come up with a loan. In a letter of 1932 quoted here he instructs his agent to suggest a fee of 30 pounds per review to *The Spectator*, but to be willing to settle for 25 pounds (over 400 pounds by today's standards). In the case of the Catholic press, after his conversion in late 1930, he was willing to accept from Catholic editors what he described to Graham Greene as joke-wages. The entire royalties on *Edmund Campion*, he gave in perpetuity to Campion Hall, the home of the Jesuits in Oxford.

Mr. Stannard has spent ten years on researching the book. He corrects facts and dates in Christopher Syke's earlier but still highly valuable biography, and, unlike Sykes, has been in touch with Evelyn Gardner. Her comments about her marriage to Waugh are both instructive and charitable. A great deal of light, too, is thrown on his methods of composition. Referring to *Scoop*, Mr. Stannard observes: "Waugh worked on his manuscript like a cabinet-maker inserting inlay." There are also some flashes of wit, which Waugh would have admired. Mr. Stannard's account of Evelyn's attempt to drown himself in 1925 ends: "He swam into a shoal of jellyfish and was stung back to reason." But some passages must have Waugh turning in his grave. One concerns his eccentric friend Conrad Russell, who is described as a man having "quantities of disposable wealth to waste on presents for Lady Diana [Cooper]."

Where Mr. Stannard is at his best is in his examination of Waugh's search for order. From his earliest days at Lancing he had assumed that there was an inherent pattern in life, and the writers that he came most to admire were those whose books were carefully structured, each chapter being subject to the whole. For him there was a direct link between *wholeness* and *holiness*. When he wrote of Rossetti as a mystic without a creed, or as a Catholic without the consolation of the church, he was drawing a portrait of himself as a young man. Even during his agnostic period at Oxford, art was for him a surrogate religion. Later, after his reception into the church, he would say that what had won him over was not so much the splendors of the liturgy, but "the spectacle of the priest as [a] craftsman" on the steps of the altar.

The clash of opposites in his character is well brought out here. A diary entry from his schoolmastering period reads: "Next Thursday I am to visit a Father Underhill about being a parson. Last night I was very drunk. How odd those two sentences seem together." Then there is the conflict between the self-effacing artist and the ambitious man of the world. To the latter everything is of supreme importance — handmade shoes, ties from Chavet and a fashionable London address. (How Waugh suffered by being brought up on the edges of Golders Green.)

Yet as he grew older, and encouraged by his second wife, Laura Herbert, whom he married in 1937, temporal matters came for him to count for less and less. Supernatural reality became more and more the only true register of meaning. In *Men at Arms* Guy Crouchback argues that the supernatural is real, and that what most people call "real" is a mere shadow. The supernatural order, he declares, " is not something added to the natural order, like music or painting . . . It *is* everyday life." Strictly speaking *Men at Arms*, which was not published until 1952, lies chronologically outside this first volume. To draw attention to this aspect now shows that Mr. Stannard is on the right lines for volume two.

REVIEWERS

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE, *a British writer, educator, and critic, is presently at work on an autobiography.*

BERNARD J. VERKAMP *is a professor of philosophy at Vincennes University in Vincennes, Indiana.*

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CHAPLAIN FROM THE APOCALYPSE

OUT OF THE NIGHT
THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY
OF VIETNAM VETS
William F. Mahedy
Ballantine, $13.95, 144 pp.

Bernard J. Verkamp

Several years ago, on Good Friday evening, I had occasion to attend a live performance of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* by the Indiana University School of Music. With its heart-rending libretto from the war poems of Wilfrid Owen and the *Missa pro Defunctis* being sung by a two-hundred voice choir, it was a most cathartic event, discharging, I suspect, a variety of turbulent, Vietnam-related, emotions, and bringing to all in the audience a sense of peace and reconciliation. Still, like any other humanistic attempt to find purification (such as the fishing trips and bullfighting festivals of Hemingway's war-wounded heroes), the performance could not really vent the kind of rage against God that so many Vietnam veterans have felt. That is where Mahedy's book makes its greatest contribution.

William P. Mahedy went to Vietnam in the late 1960s as if on a crusade. A Roman Catholic priest at the time, he belonged to the Army Chaplain Corps, whose motto *Pro Deo et Patria* left little room for any doubt about what side God was on. But unlike a Fulcher of Chartres, the quintessential medieval chaplain, who could wallow in blood up to his knees in the Holy City itself without ever questioning the sacredness of his mission, Father Mahedy apparently came to see more than the misery that a war can bring on. Mainly through the eyes of the men he was serving, he discovered the sinfulness of the war, something more than an apocalyptic trek through Death Valley. *Out of the Night* is a chronicle of how he and his fellow Vietnam vets have been faring on a dreadful trip into a dark night of the soul.

Notwithstanding his departure from the Augustinian religious community to which he once belonged, his subsequent marriage, and his entry into the Episcopal church, Father Mahedy has lost none of his familiarity with the *Doctor Gratiae*. He knows Augustine's just war theory well, and applies it with devastating effect against the global war-planning of politicians who were responsible for sending American youth off to fight in Vietnam. Nor is he blinded to Augustine's understanding of concupiscence as it surfaces in the wild sexual impulses of the soldier on leave, or as it finds expression in the *libido dominandi* of the combatant. It is precisely in terms of the *libido dominandi* — that "beastly desire" or *furor, ferg,* and *berserkir,* as George Dumézil has called it in his study of the "dark side" of the Indo-European warrior — that Father Mahedy locates the primordial sinfulness of all wars, just and unjust alike. But it is especially in pointing a way out of the darkness that the author shows his lingering Augustinian sensibility.

As a chronicle of the descent into the night, Mahedy's book is not all that original. Much of what it records about the barbarism and savagery of the American soldier in Vietnam, or about the corruption of his spirit, his loss of innocence and faith, as well as his tragic experience of rejection upon returning home, has been published previously. Still, the book should send shock waves through the Christian community in this country. For, given his unique perspective as a chaplain, Father Mahedy is able to document, as no one has before, the extent to which the American churches have failed the Vietnam veteran.

Other recent studies have hinted in passing at the high degree of hostility many American soldiers fighting in Viet-

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nam came to feel toward their chaplains. Father Mahedy confirms these rumors on the basis of his own three-year tour of duty there, and admits that it was largely deserved. Having received next to no theological training specifically oriented toward the kind of mission they were undertaking, the majority of chaplains, he says, came to Vietnam with the same mistaken religious assumption as the troops — the assumption, namely, of American civil religion that God was on our side and, like John Wayne, would sooner or later come to our rescue. This lack of proper training, coupled with too close an identification with the "green machine," left most of the chaplains blind to the "sin of war," and in no position to give the men "the kind of spiritual direction they needed." Not only were they unable to answer the soldiers' questions about the "absence of God," they actually "contributed to their loss of faith."

Still other studies have pointed out in recent years how little our American churches have done for the Vietnam veterans upon their return home. Here again, Mahedy, who has spent the last fifteen years of his life working closely with veterans' groups, agrees. The church, he says, was the one agency that could have understood and interpreted "the vets' spiritual journey in darkness." Psychotherapy, with its tendency to deresponsibilize the returning soldiers by lumping all their feelings of guilt and shame under the label of "post-traumatic stress," was unable, Mahedy concludes, to provide the "deeper probing" required by the vets' moral questions. They need the church to help them examine their consciences, to clarify their feelings of guilt, to find absolution, and a way of making amends. In some few instances, Mahedy grants, this happened, and as an appendix to his book, he includes a "Liturgy of Reconciliation" which was used at a number of special religious services and Masses for vets.

But for the most part, he says, the churches have made "no attempt to reach out or to assist the vets," thereby driving the vets still deeper into the "dark night," and leaving them to themselves to find a way out.

Several chapters of this book describe how the vets have been trying to do just that, by banding together at Vet Centers and elsewhere for "rap sessions," symposia, seminars, and the like, and by engaging in political activities of the sort that will, as Robert Jay Lifton has suggested, "animate" their feelings of guilt. Father Mahedy sees the hand of God in all these secular affairs, and is obviously proud of the role he has himself played in expediting them.

The better part of his book, however, is given over to describing how he has been trying to direct his fellow vets out of their dark night along biblical and mystical lines. Following the anonymous, fourteenth-century author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, he advises the vets to learn "to be at home in the darkness" by linking their own experience of the "absence of God" with that of Job on the dungheap and Jesus on the cross. This does not provide the vet with the cheap divine intimacy so typical of contemporary religion in America. But it will help him see how in his absence, God is "making room for sin within the boundaries of humanity," and "calling forth a longing in [his] disciples." Out of his nihilism ("It don't mean nothin', Chaplain") the vet may be able to fashion a "cloud of forgetting," walk away from his rage and hatred, and in the experience of his "lowliness," like Mary, find cause again for joy and peace.

In his classic World War I novel, *Soldier's Pay*, William Faulkner presented as the father of the wounded hero an Episcopalian rector who, because he had long ago lost his faith, could not cope with the truth of his son's wounds, and during the very season of Easter had to rely on false, purely naturalistic hopes. Father Mahedy is one Episcopalian priest who, even after Vietnam, has not lost his faith, and who, therefore, has had the courage to face the truth of his own and his fellow vets' wounds. His book is exactly what has been needed, and not only by the veterans.

Commonweal welcomes letters on subjects treated in its pages. Letters of not more than 250 or 300 words naturally have a better chance of being published.

IN BRIEF

STORMING HEAVEN: LSD AND THE AMERICAN DREAM. *By Jay Stevens. Atlantic Monthly Press, $19.95, 396 pp.*

Perhaps the subject (or the book-cover's melting face) may turn you off. Don't let that happen. If you are at all intrigued by the madness of the sixties in America, treat yourself to the pleasure of reading this book. I guarantee it will rearrange many of your judgments of the psychedelic movement and its significance for understanding what a mystery we human beings are. The author sharpens the edge on all those urgent questions left hanging when psychedelic experimentation was abruptly halted in 1965/66 (e.g., regarding therapeutic uses, the permanency of personality change, and the validity of chemically induced religious experience). Jay Stevens proves himself a superb social histo-

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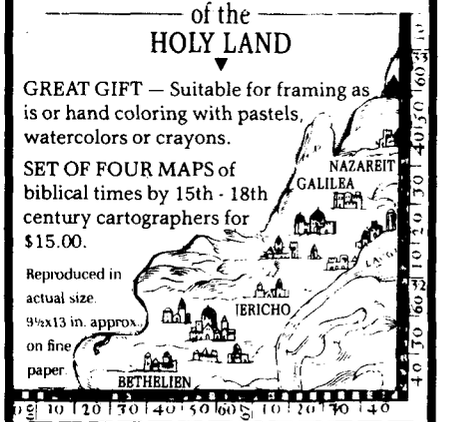

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rian with a ripping good story to tell. He tells it brilliantly, dramatically, and with just the right mix of skepticism and appreciation.

Stevens takes you behind the sensationalist press reports of the era to the Daedalus-Icarus replay that this story is. You feel you are there in 1943 when Albert Hoffmann, a Swiss chemist, first synthesized LSD-25; there when in the early fifties Aldous Huxley, Gerald Heard, and Alan Watts "turned on" to mind-altering drugs; there in 1956 when the CIA started spying on banker Gordon Wasson's hunt for hallucinogenic Mexican mushrooms; there at the Six Gallery in 1955 for Allen Ginsberg's first recital of *Howl*; there, in the early sixties — at Harvard, Cuernavaca, and the Hitchcock mansion in Millbrook, New York — for Timothy Leary's psilocybin and LSD binges; and there in California, 1965/66, for Ken Kesey's "kool-aid acid tests" for the masses. Stevens provides pointed analyses of the era's cultural currents, the politics of the consciousness movement (elitists vs. democratic populists), and fascinating background history that allows you to countextualize supporting cast and the principal tragi-comic wizards. Truth being stranger than fiction, even G. Gordon Liddy breaks into the act.

In his epilogue, Stevens tells us that the story is far from over. Some Daedaluses survive. A first-rate, judicious job at a book that, given all the misinformation (e.g., LSD provokes psychosis, damages chromosomes, etc.), badly needed to be written.

D.T.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 578)

11], contains an error. The Chair of the Board of ACCU is Dr. Frank *Kerins*, President of Carroll College in Helena, Montana. Dr. Kerins was born and bred in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Several members of the family were present in New Orleans at the time of his presentation at Xavier University.

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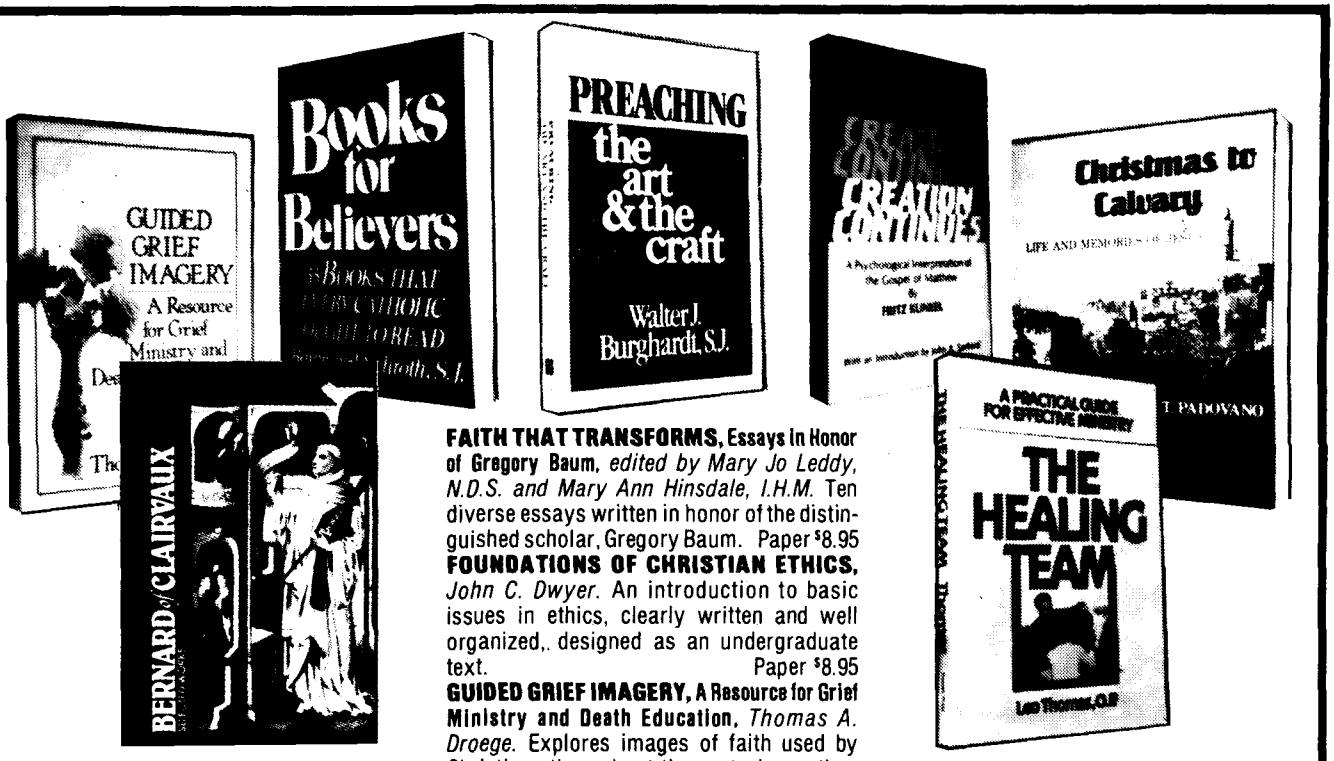

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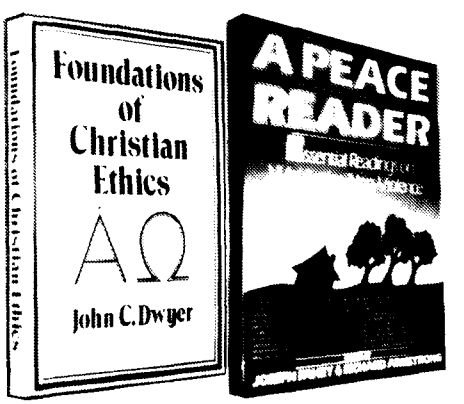

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INTELLECTUALS AND RELIGION

Recently *The New York Times Magazine* carried an article on the "return to religion" among intellectuals. From Harvard to Berkeley, among both professors and students, and amid inquisitive people generally, there is an undeniable renewal of interest in the questions traditional religion raises and seeks to answer. This interest is largely a result of the failures of secular substitutes for religion (such as rationalism, narcissism, technological utopianism, aestheticism, and extremist political ideologies) to give abidingly satisfying answers to the truly significant puzzles in life: goodness, suffering, love, death, and the meaning of it all.

By no means, however, does this religious reawakening entail falling into the suffocating arms of a Rev. Moon or a Jerry Falwell, or embracing the ersatz gods of dog-eat-dog individualism, consumerism, or America First, which we see celebrated all around us these days. Nor does the religious renaissance imply a retreat from working for peace and justice. Rather, there is an awareness that, in the words of Jean Bethke Elshtain, religious commitment "can help further social reform," and that religion can supply the ethical bedrock upon which to make political commitments which are far more solid than those based on passing ideologies and enthusiasms. Nor does the new openness to religion signify a hostility to science, but rather an appreciation of the limits of science and the dangers of pseudo-scientific messianisms.

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